University of Alberta

Disciplining Development: Sex, Power and the (Re)Construction of Women in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone

by

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This dissertation is humbly dedicated to Tryphena, Salamatu, Zainab, Fatmata, Marie, Zainab, Lucinda, Mariatu, Jeneba, Katiata, Isatau, Kadie, Mabinty, Marion, Jamalitu, Sallamatu, Salamatu, Mansaray, Isatu, Kadiatu, Esther, Kadiatu, Neafa, Regina, Alimatu, Isatu, Moussu, Mamsu, Fatmata, Sophia, Anita, Ramatu, Isata, Mariatu, Aminata, Zainab, Fatmata, Aminata, Aminata, Kadiatu, Fatmata, Josephine, Maragrette, Fatmata, Mariatu, Amueta, Abibatu, Fatmata, and Ingreta.

Thank you for sharing your stories.

Abstract

Personal interviews with female soldiers in Sierra Leone in 2005 largely shape the central questions of this dissertation. In particular, this dissertation asks what types of "conflicts" continue for women in the so-called post-conflict period? I compare my interview data with dominant representations of women and girls in conflict to problematize the following: the depiction of "womenandchildren" as a coherent category; the understanding that the notion of "post-conflict" as a seamless move from war to peace; and, the dominant definition of "women's empowerment." I argue that "conflict" has been defined and conceptualized in both development and international relations scholarship far too narrowly. The traditional focus on public violence and the political timeline of war (including the declared beginning and end to conflict) has eclipsed necessary investigations into the complex and lasting impacts of war. I argue that- particularly for women- violence against the body, and regulation of the body and the self, along with silence and fear, continued in Sierra Leone long after the official end to the war. In addition, I reveal the liberal nature of development programs and how this has manifested into policies that reproduce and restrict the nuclear family. I contend that non-governmental organizations and development institutions act as governing bodies, which institute and enforce specific gender norms and hierarchies.

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Introduction:
Disciplining Development: Sex, Power, and the (Re)Construction of Women in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone

One of the most illustrative signifiers of Sierra Leone's 11-year civil conflict is an image of a boy, about 12 years old, wearing ratty clothing and a tough expression holding and AK-47. Variations of this image have been used on countless pamphlets and posters to "raise awareness" about child soldiers, to solicit donations for war-torn African countries, and in advertising the need for research in the areas of peace and post-conflict.[1] The young boy soldier is used to represent Africa but, ironically, it has become representative of the collage of cliché identities associated with Sierra Leone: disenfranchised youth, impoverished citizen, boy soldier, and uneducated child. (Kaplan 1994, Knight 2004) It was after I travelled to Sierra Leone in October of 2005 that began to realize more fully how this image of the boy soldier had masked, and somehow eclipsed, many other identities, including educated youth, leader, a rich ruling elite,[2] and female soldier.

I was most concerned with female soldiers as an often unexplored and underrepresented category of "war affected" citizens. The original objective of my field research in Sierra Leone was to monitor reintegration programs and to evaluate the extent to which they included female soldiers. In the first stages of my research I anticipated the dissertation would focus primarily on government and institutional

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[1] For examples of such images go to .worldvision.com.au/.../S2_4_Rights.jpg, www.gendercide.org/case_conscription.html, news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2994096.stm or www.mylearningspace.net.au/.../34/Figure-14.jpg. In fact the image found at users.otenet.gr/~tzelepisk/yc/cs.htm of a 12 year old boy soldier can be seen on multiple cites and campaign posters including the Children and War: Impact project at the University of Alberta.

[2] For more detailed analysis of the economic elite in African countries and the corporate benefits of war see Collier (2000); Sawyer (2004); and Reno (1997).

policy in the post-conflict context. However, this focus changed significantly in the field. (Clark 2006) As I began to ask local social and aid workers in Freetown and in Makeni, Sierra Leone about female soldiers, I realized the gross underestimation within reports and literature I had previously read of both the numbers of female soldiers and the extent to which they participated in the conflict. What I was confronted with was two vastly disparate versions of the same story. One story was reflected in the country reports, international non-governmental organization (INGO) and non-governmental organization (NGO) documents and proposals, as well as within the dominant literature on the civil conflict. It told a story of male rebels and militants dominating a chaotic war. A competing narrative was presented by the local organizations, aid workers, and social workers, whose story complicated the nature of the problem because they told a much more complex tale- complete with female soldiers. The significance of these two versions of the same story of conflict and post-conflict in Sierra Leone is that the former narrative is dominant in mainstream literature on conflict, as well as in the corporate media. (Smith 2005) I began to wonder why, if female soldiers existed, and in some case dominated military groups and operations, had I read so little about them? Why were they were not represented in post-conflict programs? And what were the experiences of girls and women in conflict and the so-called post-conflict era?[3]

My research objective shifted to an exploration of this lacuna: the aim was to find and interview as many female soldiers as I could in order to listen to their experiences during and after the war and hear how they understood these experiences.

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[3] Whenever I use the term post-conflict, I am referring to the generally understood definition of post-conflict as the period of time following the formal cessation of fighting; however, throughout this dissertation I critique the notion of post-conflict and try, where possible, to highlight it as a non-fixed, questionable concept.

The central questions driving this analysis in large part were inspired by the interviews I conducted with two groups of female soldiers in Sierra Leone. The stories, dreams, complaints, and desires told to me over the course of a two month stay in Sierra Leone forced me to reconsider what I had previously "learned" about development, gender and conflict, violent women, and soldiering. Three particular disruptions developed throughout the interviews. The first was the realization that the depiction of "womenandchildren" as a coherent category of war victims is overly simplistic and ignores the variety of roles women and girls possess during war as well as their agency during this period. The second was that the notion of "post-conflict" as a seamless move from war to peace ignored many aspects of various ongoing "conflicts"- particularly for women who experience sexual violence. Third, Western conceptions dominate the academic discourses on "empowerment;" notions of "women's empowerment" often have been conceived in the absence of women's own voices.

In light of these disruptions, the central question of this dissertation became: what types of conflicts continue for female soldiers "post-conflict?" This central question has required me to seriously reconsider the traditional meanings of conflict and violence that are offered within international relations. This question is the heart of each of the chapters of this dissertation. Chapter Three identifies female soldiers as conflicting with typical imaginaries of "combatants." In addition, this chapter considers the conflicts female soldiers face in the midst of reintegration and reordering policies post-conflict. Chapter Four considers empowerment projects as a source of continued violence in the form of regulation, reordering, and (self)policing. Finally, Chapter Five exposes sexual violence as a tool of war that does not desist with a declared end to war

and the body as a site of conflict. The emphasis on conflict throughout the dissertation is meant to disrupt depictions of the "post"-war moment as something remarkably unlike war. I argue that- particularly for women- violence against the body, and regulation of the body and the self, along with silence and fear, continued in Sierra Leone long after the official end to the war.

Along with this central questions, secondary questions to this dissertation include: Are terms associated with post-conflict development, such as "reintegration," "rehabilitation," "reconstruction," "empowerment," "victim," and "soldier," gender neutral terms? Why are women's own voices so frequently absent from policies and programs that name them as beneficiaries? What kinds of discourses are used to describe the process of reintegration post-conflict? Are there differences in the processes of reintegration for women and men that have been ignored or silenced? What accounts for these silences and what are the implications of the silence? Do female soldiers' own accounts of their experience of the conflict in Sierra Leone and their needs and desires post-conflict coincide with dominant representations of female soldiers? If not, what accounts for this gap and what are the consequences in terms of the possibility of reintegration, peace, and rehabilitation for female soldiers?

Dominant representations such as "boy soldier" and "male disenfranchised youth" continue to be perpetuated not only by dominant accounts of the Sierra Leone conflict, but also by post-conflict programs that are designed with specific gendered beneficiaries in mind. (Ginwright and Cammorota 2002; McIntyre 2003) Without a clear recognition of the roles and experiences of female soldiers in the Sierra Leone conflict, post-conflict programs cannot address and, therefore are unlikely to meet their

needs post-conflict. Moreover, the current understandings of post-conflict, peace, and reintegration in Sierra Leone are highly gendered, due, in part, to an absence of female soldiers' own accounts of the war and the "post"-war period.

A number of important historical and contemporary realities, as well as theoretical insights inform this dissertation. First, post-conflict development continues to be a major global focus for both policy-makers and academics. Further, given the growing conflation of security and development, or, the "radicalization of development," (Duffield 2001) Western nations are increasingly considering international development as directly impacting their own prosperity and security.[4] As a result, many Western donor governments and Western based organizations and institutions have taken an active role in overseeing the process of post-conflict reconstruction and development. This dissertation suggests such interventions function to inscribe a liberal order. Despite the increased role of international actors in developing nations' affairs- particularly of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and a plethora of development agencies- there has been insufficient critical investigation of the political and ethical rationalities and impact of these actors on developing nations.

Second, given the tendency of international organizations and development organizations to create and reuse "models"[5] for development projects, investigating and critiquing these models- specifically how women are "processed" through and

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[4] For example, see Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's Speech on October 2nd 2001. He declared, "The starving, the wretched, the dispossessed, the ignorant, those living in want and squalor from the deserts of Northern Africa to the slums of Gaza, to the mountain ranges of Afghanistan: they too are our cause." (2001)

[5] Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programs (DDR programs) are an example of this. Similar models of this program were used by the Untied Nations in Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

envisioned by these models- is essential. In particular, in a highly securitized moment such as the so-called transition from war to peace, the gendered ordering that takes place in the name of "reconstruction" and "rehabilitation" must be explored. Moreover, identifying the ways in which the "post"-conflict transition in Sierra Leone has been gendered might allow us to locate important sites of resistance and possibilities for change.

Third, this project weaves an innovative perspective that crosses over and in-between the constructed subfield borders within the discipline of political science and, in the process, disrupts the conventional boundaries between international relations, development studies, critical security studies and critical feminist studies. In addition, this analysis weaves together literatures that typically do not reference each other, including literature on subjects such as women and war, criminology, peace studies, development, security, and sexuality. The main bodies of literature pertinent to my doctoral research explore the intersections of the following themes: gender and war, post-conflict (and) reintegration, and case studies and historical accounts of Sierra Leone.

A survey of some of the major contours of the gender and war literature provides a useful context for a discussion of the historical and contemporary roles played by girls and women in revolutions, wars, and conflicts generally and by female soldiers in particular. This work is useful for understanding some of the assumptions, biases, and stereotypes associated with women and war. The survey of literature on post-conflict reintegration offers important insights for my analysis both of the practical operation of reintegration programs and the perceptions of "post"-conflict transition.

My aim is to complicate how we understand the latter, by illuminating the persistence of certain gender norms as well as the disruptions of some of the gender stereotypes discussed previously. My review of the accessible English-language literature on Sierra Leone's history, including its civil conflict, as well as an analysis of the current state of Sierra Leonean affairs indicates first what is available and second how my works fills a lacuna. The following brief review of this literature shows the productive syntheses that emerge when these compartmentalized areas of study are brought into dialogue.

Literature Review

i. Gender and War

The literature on gender and war[6] makes up a small fraction of the massive amount written about war and security studies generally. Joshua S. Goldstein stated that feminist literature on war and peace has made little impact on the discussions and empirical research taking place in the predominantly "male mainstream" of political science or military history. (Goldstein 2001, 35) One comprehensive survey of scholarship on war and peace identified only six gender-related index entries, all of which concerned women- "men still do not have gender." (Goldstein 2001, 35)

The quantity of gender and war literature is not an indication of the quality of the research being conducted in this area. Although gender often remains an afterthought or a side note to so-called "harder" international relations issues, the gender and war literature is diverse and growing significantly. Cynthia Enloe's *Beaches, Bananas, and Bases* was perhaps the first "gender and war" text to be given significant attention by mainstream

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[6] See Sylvester (2005), Biles and Hyndman (2004), Jacobs, Jacobsen and Marchbank (2000), Bouta, Frerks and Bannon (2004), Meintjes, Pillay and Turshen (2001), Turshen and Twagiramariya (1998), Cockburn and Zarkov (2002), Whitworth (2004), Enloe (1982, 2007), Moser and Clark (2001), Waller and Rycengra (2001), Sweetman (2005), Carpenter (2006), and Sjoberg (2006).

international relations scholars. (Enloe 1983) Though it is dated, it remains a valuable introduction to the study of how femininity and masculinity are constructed within military cultures. Some of Enloe's more recent contributions further press issues related to gender, violence, and militarism. (1988, 1993, 2000, 2007) Selected new and exciting contributions to the field of gender and conflict include Laura Sjoberg's book *Gender, Justice, and the Wars in Iraq: A Feminist Reformulation of Just War Theory* (2006), *Innocent Women and Children: Gender, Norms and the Protection of Civilians* by Charli Carpenter (2007), and Christine Sylvester's article "The Art of War/The War Question in Feminist IR." (2005) There is also particularly interesting work emerging on women's roles in guerrilla and revolutionary movements in regions such as El Salvador, Nicaragua and Columbia. (Viterna 2006; Hernández 2003; De Volo 2003)

There are several general texts specifically examining the multiple ways that women are involved in, and impacted by, conflict. For example, *The Women and War Reader* is a classic text that introduces readers to issues from female combatants, sexual violence, to militarization. (Lorentz and Turpin 1998) The greatest strength of this manuscript is that it highlights violent women as an important category. In particular, Carolyn Nordstrom's chapter "Girls Behind the (Front) Lines" provides a rare and insightful case study on female soldiers in Mozambique. "What Women do in Wartime: Gender and Conflict in Africa" by Meredeth Turshen and Clotilde Twagiramariya is another edited volume looking at women and war with a focus on the continent of Africa. (Turshen and Twagiramariya 1998) Although both of these texts are useful and present novel and rare case studies, the majority of the content focuses primarily on female victims, female activists, and women's experiences of violence rather than female perpetrators, violent women, and women

combatants.

The dominant understanding of women as victims in war is evident in literature that constructs women as "naturally" peaceful and men as naturally violent and aggressive.[7] The construction of women as peaceful, nurturing, and benevolent has been built on, studied, and tested over time and space. This literature rests on a gendered bifurcation involving two distinct identities: the aggressive, valiant, protective male soldier and the weak, frightened female civilian in need of protection. These two imaginary subjects have become icons in conventional depictions of conflict. Exploring the social norms, the myths, and the assumptions that inform this subject binary, and the notion that "men make war, women make peace,"(Lorentzen and Turpin 1998, 3) is an essential first step in considering the dominant understanding of women's roles in conflict as well as the resistance to notions of female soldiers and violent women.

The assumption that women are only or even primarily victims during war has been fuelled by the increasing documentary evidence of the use of rape and sexual violence as a tactic of war throughout history. Susan Brownmiller's seminal work *Against our will: Men, women, rape* was one of the first sources to shed light on the history of wartime rape. (Brownmiller 1975) Since this piece was published, numerous scholars have examined the extent to which rape is used as a tactic of war (Barstow 2000) and the implications this has on the ongoing transformations of war-torn states. (Baldi and MacKenzie 2007) Although there have been case studies on sexual violence in various regions including the "comfort women" of South Korea,' (Chung 1995; Hyun-Kyung 2000) and the mass rapes in Bangladesh, (Habiba 1998) Germany, (Grossman 1999) and Algeria, (Chelala 1998).

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[7] See Cattell and Lawson (1962), Constantini and Craik (1972), Sikula (1973), Kanter, (1981) in Jill M Bystydzienski, (1993).

Perhaps the most robustly explored instance of wartime rape happened as a result of the use of mass rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina. (Gutman 1992; Allen 1996)[8]

There is evidence that women, children and the elderly are more vulnerable during war, that they are more likely to be uprooted due to conflict, and are more likely to experience sexual violence, (Lorentzen et al., 1998) there is also important research that has considered the detrimental impacts of making generalized assumptions about victims and perpetrators.(Carpenter 2006)[9] Carpenter notes how, throughout history, women and children have been defined as inherently more vulnerable than males. Carpenter argues that the focus on protecting, evacuating and providing aid to women and children during times of crisis has actually rendered males- particularly civilian males- susceptible to violence and other forms of insecurity.

There are a multitude of tests and studies that have concluded that women are inherently less aggressive, violent, confrontational, and selfish than men. For example, studies done in the early 1960s and 1970s found that women in female groups were more likely to form relationships than compete with one another. These types of studies concluded that women were more oriented towards cooperation than achievement in comparison to men.[10] There are also studies that have found that states with "higher levels of domestic gender equality" are not as prone to violence during conflict compared with states with "lower levels of domestic gender equality." (Tessler and Warriner 1997) The

[8] There are several different arguments offered in explanation of why there was such a great deal of attention given to the mass rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina. For example, Lene Hansen (2000) posits that some accounts of the rapes described them as "exceptional" Serbian warfare, creating a national security crisis requiring outside intervention. She contrasts this to accounts of war rape that tend to frame it as a normal or unavoidable feature of warfare (therefore *not* a national security concern requiring outside intervention.)

[9] See also Ian Bannon and Maria C. Correia (2006).

[10] See Cattell and Lawson 1962, Constantini and Craik 1972, Sikula 1973, Kanter, 1981 in Jill M Bystydzienski, (1993).

generalized assumptions Tessler and Warriner make about equality indicate the liberal bias of this study. Jacquelyn White's finding that women are more likely to share power have been used to support the hypothesis that women are not likely to instigate or involve themselves in conflicts. (White 1998) Several other studies have concluded that women are more peaceful than men, including Connie de Boer's poll on the European peace movement (1985) and Clyde Wilcox, Lara Hewitt and Dee Allsop's analysis of the gender gap in attitudes toward the Gulf War. (1996) Such analyses have been used to support the thesis that women are less inclined to participate in war, and perhaps also in politics.

Part of the logic fuelling these types of research initiatives and tests is that women are more peaceful because of their roles as mothers. As Jodi York has argued, "most traditional logic behind women's peace groups relies on the conservative- even Victorian- ideal of motherhood, where women function as caring, nurturing and protective moral guides for their children." (1998, 19) April Carter also describes the imaginary of the woman as wife, girlfriend, or mother, nervously waiting for their soldiers to return from combat. (1998, 33) The work of maternal feminists has helped to construct an image of women as possessing an "essential" life-giving, peaceful nature based on their reproductive capacities. (Daly 1984; Elshtain 1987; Ruddick 1989) Perhaps the most succinct summary of this argument comes from Elizabeth Cady Stanton:

> That great conservator of woman's love, if permitted to assert itself as it naturally would in freedom against oppression, violence and war, would hold all these destructive forces in check, for woman knows the cost of life better than man does, and not with her consent would one drop of blood ever be shed, one life sacrificed in vain. (1975, 64)

The unfortunate by-product of studies and literature that constructs women as "naturally" peaceful is that violent and aggressive women becomes constructed as unnatural or an aberration from the presumed norm. In effect, the study of women who commit violence can sometimes be seen as the study of exceptions rather than the disruption of traditional gendered norms and typologies associated with sex roles and war.

Finally, the image of women as peaceful is partly informed by discourses and ideas that place women and their activities and skills outside the political realm. The construction of women as passive, apolitical, and fundamentally conservative has lead to conclusions that women lack the capacities necessary for political activity- particularly warfare. The notion that women are more cooperative and more averse to risk also supports the argument that the arena of political conflict is "no place for a woman." (York 1998, 21) The qualities of "natural" females are seen as in opposition to bravery, aggression, and boldness- traits that are typically defining qualities of soldiers. In fact, by some accounts, war is the absolute test of masculinity and manhood and its success becomes defined by soldiers' ability to distance themselves from feminine qualities. (Whitworth 2004)

With a renewed focus on terrorism since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, increasing attention has been paid to female suicide bombers, female members of guerrilla movements, and female soldiers- particularly American female soldiers in Iraq. Critical work on women and militant groups and armed movements has revealed the heterogeneous roles that women have played in armed struggles for centuries and their continued participation in modern warfare. (Morris 1993; Baksh et al. 2005)

Women's participation in armed movements and conflict have taken place over time and in a variety of geographical and cultural contexts including the Chinese cultural revolution, the resistance to the racist brutality of apartheid South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, opposition to Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, and a globalized opposition to American activity in Iraq.[11]

The work of critical feminists such as Cynthia Enloe, Elise Barth, Louise Olsson, Inger Skjelsbaek, Karen Hostens, Patricia T. Morris, and Tina Johnson has helped to disrupt stereotypes of "women as victim" and "women as naturally peaceful." Some of the research that has disrupted these dominant discourses focuses on issues such as the construction of masculinity and femininity within the military, (Sasson-Levy 2003) legal issues in relation to women's participation in conflict, (Harries-Jenkins 2002) the interplay of race and gender within militaries, (White 2007) and issues of citizenship and nationality associated with military membership. (Feinman, 2000; Segal 1995)

Much of the burgeoning literature examining female combatants focuses on Western nations. Doo-Seung Hong's article, "Women in the South Korean Military," (2002) Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn's (2002) piece on women in the Canadian Forces and Orna Sasson-Levy's (2003) work on women in the Israeli military are examples of work that encourages a rethinking of gender and the military. There is certainly research being done on female soldiers in the global south; however, the construction of these female soldiers and the implications for female inclusion in militant groups is presented quite differently. Whether it the "challenge" of gender equality and the "implications" for demilitarization associated with the armed forces in South Africa (Heinecken 2002; Cock 1994) or the

[11] For further discussion of women's emancipatory and nationalist movements see Carter (1998).

"disastrous" experience of girls fighting in Mozambique, (West 2000) these female soldiers seem to be presented as a problem rather than as a sign of progress and equality like their northern counterparts.

ii. Post-Conflict and Reintegration

I agree with Cynthia Cockburn's conclusion that there are two schools of thought in peace and post-conflict studies: those who "stand above conflict and look for rational value-free solutions" and those who "take issue" with notions of neutrality in post-conflict reconstruction. (Cockburn 1999, 7) My work falls in the latter category. For the purpose of this dissertation, there are several questions surrounding the terms 'post-conflict' and 'reintegration' that need to be answered. First, how have these terms been conceptualized? Second, how have these concepts been applied and utilized by international organizations and institutions? Third, has there been any consideration of gender in the literature focusing on post-conflict and reintegration? The existing literature that helps to answer these questions comes from post-conflict and peace studies, critical feminist studies, and, surprisingly, criminology.

The concept of reintegration is rooted within criminology literature. The most basic definition of reintegration given in criminology is: "a process intended to reduce recidivism after a criminal's release from prison." (Maruna and Immarigeon 2004, 6) In this context, two facets of reintegration are described. First, reintegration is seen as a process: "reintegration (or 're-entry' as it is sometimes called) is both an event and a process.... re-entry is also a long-term process, one that actually starts prior to release and continues well afterwards." (Maruna and Immarigeon 2004, 5) The second dynamic of reintegration is associated with "correction," "rehabilitation," and

"treatment" and is aimed at preparing criminals to be successful citizens. (Maruna and Immarigeon 2004, 5)

Reintegration is often defined in contrast to other concepts. Reintegration is associated with desistance, or the "termination point" at which offending ceases. (Maruna and Immarigeon 2004, 102) A distinction is also made between reintegration and stigmatization. Reintegration is described as the expression of community disapproval followed by gestures of acceptance into the community of "law abiding citizens" while shaming is described as a divisive mechanism that creates "a class of outcasts." (Braithwaite1989, 55) Thus, the assumptions associated with reintegration are that criminals have deviated from societal norms and must be transformed or moulded in such a way as to ensure that they can return and function "normally" in society.

There is little research that considers the linkages between the genealogy of the concept of reintegration in criminology and its use in post-conflict discourses. Within literature looking at the disarmament process, reintegration is defined generally as "the process which allows ex-combatants and their families to adapt economically and socially to productive civilian life." (McConnan and Uppard, 2002) In this sense, reintegration in the post-conflict context is conceived in a similar way to reintegration within criminology. Both assume a desistance of criminal or combat behaviour, "re-entry" back into community or civilian life, and rehabilitation or an adaptation of behaviour to discourage recidivism. When reviewing the reintegration policies associated with Sierra Leone's disarmament process, these similarities become clear. For example, the National Commission for Disarmament Demobilization and

Reintegration declared that reintegration policies were designed to "support their *resettlement* into *normal* society. (NCDDR emphasis added)

There is a growing body of research that examines the gendered power dynamics associated with reintegration, as well as post-conflict in general. Susan McKay and Dyan Mazurana's text, *Where are the Girls?: Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique, Their Lives During and After War,* is a well known example of a gendered analysis of reintegration programs. (2004) Although their work focuses on child soldiers, [12] McKay and Mazurana's report has been an indispensable resource due to its comprehensive analysis of the health, security, and social status of girl soldiers and its recommendations for policy makers and future research.

One of the most useful interrogations of the term "post-conflict" comes from Susan R. McKay. In 'The Psychology of Societal Reconstruction and Peace: A Gendered Perspective," McKay asked several key questions that have typically been ignored by policy makers and researchers working in the area of post-conflict reintegration. These questions are worth noting in detail:

> 1. In what ways are gender relationships maintained or re-created in peace accords, in the legal system including the Constitution, in land rights, and in political participation?
> 2. What is peace from the perspective of women, and how does this relate to reconstruction?
> 3. How are women affected by gendered power arrangements of reconstruction?
> 4. How does post-conflict reconstruction address the gender-specific traumas women have experienced on individual, family, and societal levels, such as rape and sexual torture?
> 5. What psychological processes affect the ability of women to play full, equal, and effective roles in societal reconstruction (for example, power arrangements, social identity processes, gender role stereotyping)?

[12] For another report on child soldiers disarmament and reintegration see Angela Veal (2003), Beth Verhey (2001), and Nathalie de Watteville, (2002).

6. Are women's rights recognized as human rights, and how are these rights actualized in societal rehabilitation and reconstruction processes?
7. How are conflict resolution processes gendered? (McKay 1998, 352)

Women typically take on different roles during conflict, which may or may not give them access to more power and authority in their communities. (McKay 1998) However, even for those who gain access to positions of authority, this power shift has been found to be temporary. Mari Caprioli explains that "the national patriarchy begins to reassert itself after the war and expects women to return to 'the way they were before the war'" or "to their subordinate positions." (2001, 436) McKay similarly concludes, "the [post-conflict] reality usually proves that, regardless of culture and place, women's roles revert to traditional ones, and nationalistic loyalties are more highly values than is gender equality."(McKay 1998, 356)

Some of the feminist work that has critically analysed the post-conflict reintegration process has concluded that "post-conflict," "peace," and "rehabilitation" are misnomers for women because they presume the benefits of "going back," or "restoring to a position or capacity that previously existed" without sufficiently considering the oppressive or violent nature of the previous power arrangements and institutions. (Baksh et al 2005) This work has also shown that the assumption of the male soldier and the female victim has meant that the diversity and complexity of women's experiences, identities and roles in both the conflict and post-conflict moment are not adequately explored and documented. Critical research has done much to disrupt dominant conceptions of the "post"-conflict moment as a universally positive transition from war to peace; however, there is still much to be done in terms of investigating the gendered nature of post-conflict policies, the biases of international organizations in

relation to gendered roles and needs post-conflict, the gendered nature of conflict resolution processes, the power arrangements that take place post-conflict, and the actors involved in facilitating and instituting power arrangements.

In the next section I provide a review of some of the English-language literature on the political and cultural history of Sierra Leone. The aim is to provide an overview of important moments in this history that are relevant to my research, as well as to identify gaps in the available literature relating to the history of this west African country.

iii. Sierra Leone: History and War

There is a dearth of English language literature on "pre"-conflict Sierra Leone. Much of the existing literature on the country focuses on the 11-year civil conflict or its developmental struggles. Older texts such as *West Africa: Quest for God and Gold 1454-1578*, (Blake 1977) proved useful for its insights into the relative lack of historical data on Sierra Leone. Looking to anthropology, education, and sociology proved fruitful for some general information about pre-colonial Sierra Leone and the make up and development of its ethno-cultural communities. For example, due to poor record keeping, a lack of resources to print legal documents, and a phenomenon of "out of print" laws (Shiaka 2005), it is extremely difficult to access information related to family law in Sierra Leone. As a result, Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp's *Family Law in Sierra Leone: A Research Report* may be one of the most comprehensive overviews of the laws regulating marriage, divorce, childbirth, and adoption. (1975) This work is extremely useful in understanding how the British legal system impacted Sierra Leone's

legal system as well as the contradictions associated with a country that recognizes both customary laws and official state law.

One of the objectives of my dissertation is to examine the ways in which sex and gender are regulated in Sierra Leone today and to explore the impact and legacies of historical forms of sexual regulation. As a result, the role of secret societies is interesting because it helps shed light on the ways that Sierra Leoneans have regulated and organized gender relations and sexuality throughout history. Of particular interest for this dissertation has been the role of secret societies. Jaqueline Knorr's chapter "Female secret societies and their impact on ethnic and trans-ethnic identities among migrant women in Freetown, Sierra Leone" provides an excellent summary of the significance of secret societies in terms of social development and organization. (2000) Knorr's work demonstrates the significance of secret societies in terms of social development and organization. Another particularly useful text has been *Sex, Politics and Empire,* by Richard Phillips. This book offers a fascinating overview of the regulation of sex by colonial administrators. (2006) Phillips concentrates on the regulation of prostitution to illustrate the colonizers' stereotypes about the sexual behaviour and roles of African men and women.

The majority of the current literature on Sierra Leone tends to focus on one of the following: the "chaotic" nature of Africa in general and West-Africa in particular, (Kaplan 1998) the role of blood diamonds in conflicts, (Smilie et al 200) child soldiers, (Zack-Williams 2001; Wessels 2006; Maclure 2006) and the lessons to be learned from the Sierra Leone conflict. (UNICEF 2005) There is a dearth of critical scholarship that explore the roles and activity of women during the war or their lives of post-conflict. Perhaps the most

notable omission in this literature is in primary data such as individual interviews- not just with female soldiers but also with local citizens in general. In effect, much of the literature about the Sierra Leone conflict and the current post-conflict moment is not inclusive of voices and perspectives of the country's citizens; rather, the literature is characterized by accounts in which the investigators "speak for" the citizens of Sierra Leone.

There is a vast body of literature on Sierra Leone and its civil conflict. Perhaps the most thorough text is Lansana Gberie's *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*. (2005) Gberie was a journalist in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 1996 and visited the country for extended periods in 1999, 2001 and 2002. Gberie interviewed many of the major players in Sierra Leone's conflict, including RUF leader Foday Sankoh, former President Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, and numerous civilians. Gberie is highly critical of any texts or reports that paint the RUF as a politically motivated revolutionary group. Instead, his work concludes that the RUF had no clear political agenda and were motivated by money and power.

Gberie was one of the co-authors of another well-known, account of Sierra Leone's conflict: *The Heart of the Matter: Sierra Leone, Diamonds and Human Security*. (Gberie and Smillie 2000) Published in 2000 during a time of increased scrutiny of the diamond industry and, particularly, the role of "blood diamonds" in fuelling, sustaining and intensifying the conflict, this report on the role of diamonds in the Sierra Leone civil war received a great deal of public attention.[13] There are also several manuscripts focusing specifically on the role of the United Nation and Britain in

[13] Several other useful and insightful texts on Sierra Leone's civil conflict include John Hirsh's *Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy* (2001); Abdullah, Ibrahim's *Between Democracy and terror: the Sierra Leone Civil War* (2004); and David Keen's *Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone* (2005).

Sierra Leone, including Assefaw Bariagaber *United Nations Peace Operations in Africa: A Cookie Cutter Approach?* (2006) and Paul Williams *Fighting for Freedom: British Military Interventions in Sierra Leone*. (2001) Despite the detailed accounts of the conflicts offered in these texts, none of them dedicate significant attention to female combatants.

A number of resources have documented the rampant use of sexual violence during Sierra Leone's civil conflict. The most useful and current data on wartime sexual violence in Sierra Leone has been produced by international organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights. Reports such as Human Rights Watch's "We'll Kill You if You Cry: Sexual Violence and the Sierra Leone Conflict" (2003) and Amnesty International's "Sierra Leone: Rape and other forms of sexual violence must be stopped," (2000) proved to be particularly invaluable for my own case investigation of sexual violence in the country. Due to security issues, agencies such as Amnesty International and Physicians for Human Rights were some of the few outside bodies on the ground during the conflict. As a result, the data and research they collected during this period is both rare and valuable. There is also a developing body of research that considers the broader implications of sexual violence over time and space and the gendered rules and norms that have motivated the practice. (Buss and Malamuth 1996; Morris 2000)

In addition to pointing out gaps in the existing literature, my objective is to show the lack of dialogue between these literatures, and why at least beginning a conversation between them is important for thinking through and addressing the issues raised by this research. For example, I argue that current work on female soldiers has not inspired significant theorization about violent women in conflict. Moreover, developments in

critical gender studies also do not seem to have destabilized hegemonic notions of hypermasculinity associated with military activity. Also, feminist theorization on the regulation of sexuality generally has been almost ignored by researchers investigating wartime rape. Finally, there is still little work being done to question how notions of peace and post-conflict are dependent on ideals of women's peaceful nature.

Chapter Overview

Each of my chapters is an attempt both to remedy the disconnect between these literatures and to add my own findings- including the testimonies of female soldiers and local citizens to the story of post-conflict Sierra Leone. Chapter One draws upon the work of critical scholarship in the social sciences and humanities, particularly Michel Foucault, Jaqueline Stevens, Lene Hansen and Jaques Donzelot to form my theoretical perspective. Chapter Two delineates the historical context of the conflict in Sierra Leone focusing on sexual violence and regulation. Chapter Three, "Madonnas, Yoobas, Warriors, or Ideal Victims?: The Dismissal of Female Soldiers in Sierra Leone" highlights the construction of "soldier" and "victim" by post-conflict programs in Sierra Leone.

The following questions drive Chapter Three: How is "victim" and "soldier" defined and constructed by post-conflict policies in Sierra Leone?; Who is perpetuating dominant discourses about these identities?; Whose voices are not represented in these discourses?; What is the impact of their exclusion?; Have gendered stereotypes influenced or been incorporated in dominant discourses?; How do interviews with female soldiers disrupt hegemonic discourses which construct "soldier," "victim," and "perpetrator?" What accounts for the gap between the representations of the experiences

and roles of females during the conflict in Sierra Leone and the narratives I collected from former female soldiers? And how has this gap impacted post-conflict programs designed to reintegrate both male and female soldiers back into their community? The central questions of this chapter contribute to the overall aim of this dissertation, which is to disrupt dominant representations of women and girls in post-conflict Sierra Leone. In addition, similar to my chapter on sexual violence and childbirth and my chapter on "empowerment," this chapter aims to show that "post-conflict," "reintegration," "rehabilitation," and "reconstruction" are *not* gender neutral terms.

In answering these questions, I first review the portrayal of former girl and women soldiers as helpless victims by international organizations, the international media, and development policies. Focusing on the absence of individual testimonies and interviews in these representations, I question how such a uniform perception of women and girls has been portrayed without actually asking if women and girls see themselves as "left behind," "abandoned," and "victims." Second, I examine how the ideal of the female war victim has impacted how former female combatants have been "processed" through disarmament and reintegration programs. I examine the reluctance of reintegration agencies to identify females who participated in war as soldiers. I argue that giving them titles such as "females associated with the war," "dependents," or "camp followers" depoliticises their roles during the conflict. Third, I argue that men and masculinity are securitized post-conflict while women are "de-securitized" and, in effect, de-emphasized in post-conflict policy making. The impact of this categorization has been that the reintegration process for men has been securitized, or emphasized as an essential element of the transition from war to peace. In contrast, the reintegration

process for females has been deemed a "social concern" and has been moralized as a "return to normal."

The motivation for Chapter Four, "Ordained Empowerment: Reconstruction, Self-policing and Neoliberal Redemption" came from a single question I asked during my interviews with former female soldiers in Sierra Leone about whether or not they thought they had more power before or after the conflict. The selective language that many of the women used in their response to me was indicative of several important aspects of post-conflict development. First, the power relations clearly happening not only within my interviews but, in the larger context, between international aid and development workers, researchers and Sierra Leoneans; second, the significance of language in development projects and programs; and finally, the contrasts between how terms were used by the development community and how they were interpreted by the "subjects" of development. After this experience, the more research I conducted, the more aware I became of some of the key concepts and catch phrases used in development discourses. In particular, I continued to notice the use of "empowerment," especially in relation to women in Sierra Leone. All kinds of reintegration programs were claiming to empower women to rebuild their lives and change their destinies, yet few of these programs defined empowerment or included the beneficiaries' own interpretations or conceptions of power or empowerment.

In much the same way that Uma Kothari talks about "the tyranny of participation," in this chapter I examine some of the contradictions associated with the concept of empowerment. I look at how various agencies and organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations, and NGOs have incorporated empowerment into their

programs directed towards women. Focusing on empowerment, this chapter seeks to answer the following questions: how is empowerment used by development and aid agencies and organizations and what is the genealogy of this concept within these discourses? What are some of the ways 'women's empowerment' has been theorized? How is the genealogy of empowerment related to participatory discourses? How was empowerment used in reintegration programs for female soldiers? These questions add to the overall aim of this dissertation, which is to critically examine the reintegration process for female soldiers in Sierra Leone and to disrupt dominant discourses relating to female soldiers.

The central questions of Chapter Four are elucidated first with a brief overview of feminist conceptions of empowerment, power and emancipation followed by a discussion of participatory research and its use of empowerment. Second, I canvass major actors in the empowerment 'issue network' and analyze how these actors are currently using empowerment. Third, I explore the critiques of the use of empowerment within development policies and programming. In particular, I focus on the neoliberal tendencies of empowerment initiatives in contrast to the emancipatory potential of empowerment envisioned by critical feminist scholars. Finally, reintegration programs for females in Sierra Leone are presented and critiqued as a case study 'empowerment' initiative.

In Chapter Five, "Loving Your Enemy: Rape, Childbirth and the Reinterpretation of Reintegration in Sierra Leone," I argue that rape as a tactic of war in Sierra Leone has largely been relegated to the margins of post-conflict, development, and security studies as a result of prioritizing "immediate" security concerns over

"other" issues and long-term planning and as a result of naming sexual assault and childbirth as "private" concerns. In turn, a second generation of war-affected children that has been born as products of these rapes has been virtually ignored despite the fact that both these groups face serious security concerns, marginalisation, poverty, and stigmatization. I argue that the discourses of reintegration, which depict violent men being disarmed so that society can "return to normal" excludes the hundreds of thousands of women and girls that were raped in Sierra Leone and the children that were born as a result. Therefore, this chapter asks: What is the experience of women and girls who were raped and the children born as a result in the post-conflict era? What are their needs and vulnerabilities post-conflict? What does the legacy of colonial sexual regulation and current family law have to do with wartime sexual violence? Why was sexual violence used as a tool of war in Sierra Leone? How have sexual violence and children born as a result of rape been addressed by development policies and programs? These central questions contribute to the overall aim of the dissertation, which is to disrupt dominant narratives about women and girls' experiences post-conflict and also to ask the question: Why types of conflicts continue 'post-conflict?'

I answer the central questions of Chapter Five by investigating five areas of silence relating to women's lives in post-conflict Sierra Leone, including: the artifice of the "natural" liberal family model in legal and development discourses; rape as a strategy of war; stigma as a product of policy making; children born of rape; and, the politics of prioritization for aid agencies and NGOs working in development. First, I look at the evidence of the liberal family model within remnant British colonial law in Sierra Leone as well as development policies. I identify, in order to deconstruct,

dichotomies associated with women- particularly mothers- and war such as courageous warriors and peaceful nurturing women. Second, I review the extent of the use of rape as a tactic of war in Sierra Leone. I present wartime rape as strategic, pervasive, and inclusive political weapon of war. Third, I claim that stigmas associated with wartime rape and children born as a result of rape[14] are a result of policies and legal structures that designate the liberal family model as the norm, in comparison to *aberrations*. Fourth, though my own interviews as well as existing literature, I present what is known about children born of war in Sierra Leone. Fifth, I critique the exclusion of children born of wartime rape from development and humanitarian agencies' existing categories of vulnerable children (child soldiers, abandoned children, and street children). I contend that this exclusion is a strategic choice based on the assumption that sex and the family are not political or security issues.

Broader Objectives

This dissertation also has some broader objectives, which will be explored in the chapters to follow. One of the broader objectives is to encourage those in the fields of international relations, development and security studies to reconsider the following: the warrior/victim binary, notions of women as peaceful nurturers, the belief that Western women's experience or definition of empowerment can be exported to women in the developing world, and the almost absolute aversion to theorizing about violent women. This dissertation is not an attempt to add women into the traditional categories of international studies such as conflict, security, and the state. Rather, my work is aimed

[14] In this dissertation I use the term "children born as a result of wartime rape" to refer to this specific category of children whose paternity is known to be linked to rape. I also use the term "children born of war" to refer to a larger population of children that may face similar stigmas and vulnerabilities to children produced during rape. Similar to R. Charli Carpenter (2007), I argue that terms such as "war babies" or "rape babies" are negative and feed the tendency to sensationalize their identity.

directly at disrupting and deconstructing these international relations concepts- particularly violence, war, security, peace, post-conflict and development. I also hope to influence policy-making for women and girls post-conflict as well as demonstrate that to construct a policy is also to construct an identity. In addition, I aspire to challenge seemingly neutral terms like reintegration, empowerment, victim, post-conflict, and soldier- especially in relation to women. My objective, particularly in Chapter Four, is to encourage the discipline of international relations to recognize and rethink the significance of sexual intercourse in relation to tactics of war and post-war reordering. Finally, I hope to illustrate that academic research can be both emotionally charged and credible.

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Chapter One
Discipline and Development: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Post-Conflict Development in Sierra Leone

This chapter provides the theoretical framework of my dissertation. This framework is generally aimed at critiquing both the liberal and neoliberal tendencies of development policies and the assumption that post-conflict development is a universal and positive transition from war to peace. I take issue with the way that liberal notions of progress, universalism, rights, and democracy have led to broad development projects and models, which solidify outside "developers" as superior overseers of development and replicate the notion of development "stages" reminiscent of modernization theory. In addition, this perspective is concerned with the increasing ways that development programs and policies have adopted neoliberal discourses. My aim is to show that development policies associated with capacity building and empowerment, along with policies aimed at creating economic efficiency, productivity and individuality are designed to hold individuals responsible for their development without offering structural possibilities for change to occur. In addition, prioritizing economic development has resulted in a decrease in both long-term projects and a decline in funding available for broader initiatives aimed at education, health, or the treatment of trauma.

Because I situate myself within international relations, I begin this chapter with a discussion of the authors within this field that have shaped my work- I call this my intellectual starting point. From here, I explain how my work is situated within critical and feminist theory. Finally, I outline the specific elements of my own theoretical framework. Each of these sections is vital to understanding both the content and the significance of the chapters that follow. First, locating my influences within international relations and

identifying my work as feminist and post-colonial indicates to the reader the bodies of work that have informed my scholarship. Second, I draw the reader from this initial work to my own theoretical approach, which I argue pushes the boundaries of international relations and feminist scholarship.

Mark Duffield's analysis of the "radicalization of development" (2001) and the Copenhagen School's rendering of security represent the two intellectual offerings that I take as the starting point for my work. The work of Mark Duffield, a prolific and experienced researcher in development, details the transitions that have taken place in relation to humanitarianism, development, and post-conflict reconstruction. (Duffield 2001; 2002) In *Global Governance and the New Wars*, Duffield coined the phrase "the radicalization of development," in reference to what he sees as the merging of development and security. For Duffield, the radicalization of development is a declaration that there is no distinct line between the development and security: "achieving one is now regarded as essential for securing the other." (2001, 16) Duffield argues that the underdeveloped South has increasingly been viewed as a source of international instability "through conflict, criminal activity and terrorism." (2001, 2) Duffield's approach represents a shift in the focus of security studies from traditional interstate wars to development and reconstruction as a source of insecurity.

As a result of the radicalization of development, those in the business of development are no longer simply securing the post-conflict environment; their recent mandates include transforming entire societies through the inculcation of "liberal peace." (2001, 2) Duffield explains that the coupling of "liberal" and "peace" has meant that liberal policies and structures are correlated with stability: "liberal values and

institutions have been vested with ameliorative and harmonizing powers." (2001, 16) One consequence of this forced marriage between liberal and peace has been that aid is not only aimed at emergency relief, but is also concerned with "conflict resolution, reconstructing social networks, strengthening civil and representative institutions, and security sector reform in the context of a functioning market economy." (2001, 11) In other words, the liberal project of development is about radical societal transformation. This conflation of development and security has pushed aid agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating development programs from the role of distributors of philanthropic donations to political directors and governors, or, the organizers of society characterized by liberal democracy and liberal political economy. Duffield summarizes this idea, "aid is no substitute for political action because it is the political action. It is now a tool of international regulation and is embedded in the networks and strategic complexes that make up liberal peace."(2001, 88)

The understanding of security offered by the Copenhagen school is helpful in thinking through the implications of Duffield's work. According to the Copenhagen School, security is not a fixed concept and cannot be defined in a static manner. Instead, it is argued that security is constructed by securitizing actors through the "speech act," or the act of naming and thereby constructing a security concern. Securitizing actors are defined as individuals, or a group- including government, leaders, or military groups- who performs the speech act. (Buzan et al 1998) Once a matter has been securitized, it is prioritized above "normal politics," and "extraordinary means" are necessary to address the problem. (Buzan and Waever 2003) As a result of this prioritization, Abrahamson argues that securitization "has clear political implications."

(Abrahamson 2005, 68) The political implications result from the heightened profile and increased attention typically given to securitized issues in terms of policy-making, funding, and media attention.

The Copenhagen School's rendering of securitization as a speech act places the securitizing actor and the audience as the central players in the construction of security. According to this approach, parties who are able to constitute a security concern typically hold positions of power; and possess a "particular legitimacy." (Hansen 2006, 35) Securitization then becomes a strategic practice aimed at swaying a targeted audience to accept the securitizing actor's interpretation of a threat.[15] In this way, securitization is an intersubjective process in the sense that it is only when the audience accepts a securitizing actor's speech act that an issue will become securitized.

My work is indebted to critical theorists of international relations and development studies who have worked to rethink ideas of security and development. I particularly draw upon the ways that Duffield and the Copenhagen school challenge traditional notions of development and security; however, I believe there remains some essential questions about gender and sexuality in relation to development and security that cannot be analyzed effectively within these approaches. Therefore, my own theoretical framework relies on a general understanding of Duffield and the Copenhagen school while also extending beyond their work to consider imperative questions associated with gender and power relations, the construction of the subject, and the spaces of silence in "intersubjective" policy dialogue.

Broadly speaking, I situate my work first within feminist theory. I am particularly sympathetic to the following general signposts of feminist theory identified by Christine Sylvester: it critically probes social theories for marks of gender that have gone unnoticed;

[15] For a more detailed explanation see Balzacq (2005).

it reveals distortions, biases, exclusions, inequalities that may be endemic to arguments, assumptions, and organizations; and it traces how gendered theories appear neutral. (Sylvester in Booth et al. 1996) I have found four central forms of gender bias endemic to literature and policy relevant to my doctoral research: the first is the selective exclusion of women's experiences; second is the common belief that women and men, as they appear in public life, are interchangeable; third, is the tendency to ignore the impact of an individual's environment and community context, and; fourth is the assumption that the language used to present ideas and create policies is "gender neutral."

Like Sylvester, my work draws from both critical feminist and post-colonial literature.[16] Post-colonialism here does not refer to the "end" of colonialism; rather, it speaks to the continuations and legacies of colonialism. Dominated by Edward Said's notion of Orientalism, or the production and reproduction of the "Orient" in relation to "the Occident," which has historically described the West as superior, (Said 1979) post-colonial studies is particularly concerned with identifying and locating sites of resistance against the ways in which the third world is represented by, and constructed through, hegemonic Western discourses.

This focus on the constructions of the West and "the rest" has inspired those in post-colonial and subaltern studies to reflect on the significance of self-representation. In "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) Gaytri Chakraborty Spivak asks if third world women have the agency required to express themselves given their subordinate positions of power. She warns that even when third world women speak, their voices are restricted by the limits and avenues allotted to them; their voices are always

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[16] Specifically, see Christine Sylvester, "Development Studies and Postcolonial Studies: Disparate Tales of the 'Third World'," Third World Quarterly, 20, 4 (August 1999): 703-21.

mediated and therefore controlled by others: "between patriarch and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears." (Spivak, 1988; 306) However, she urges the postcolonial critic to take account of these silences and find ways to break the dominance of imperial and patriarchal hegemonic ideas. The emphasis on voice, representation, and agency demanded by both feminist and post-colonial theory serves as a lynchpin for my own theoretical and methodological approaches.

This dissertation places significant emphasis on the voices of the women and men that I interviewed in Sierra Leone. These interviews, and the voices they represent, act as disruptions to dominant discourses associated with gendered norms, power, conflict, and development. In taking Spivak's warning, I neither pretend to offer the interviews as "truth," nor do I ignore my role in constructing this dissertation nor the potential for misinterpretation and misrepresentation.

My own framework draws on the theoretical insights of a number of critical social theorists, among which includes Michel Foucault's (1979; 1980) theorizing on power, discipline and punishment and sexuality, Jaqueline Stevens' (1998) insights on the liberal family and the production of gendered subjects, Lene Hansen's (2000 a; 2000b) examination of policy and identity formation and Jacques Donzelot's (1979) insights on "philanthropy" and the regulation of the family. I weave this work together to form my own theoretical approach. This approach is based on four core assertions, including: development policy discourses are forms of regulations, or disciplines; development- particularly post-conflict (re)development- is a moment in which the production of "legitimate" subjects and behaviours occurs; third, development policies are mechanisms

for creating and solidifying power relations; finally, the relationships between sex and the body to politics and power- with particular focus on the creation of the family structure- is the most significant source in understanding the power relationships taking place in the post-conflict moment. I elaborate on each of these assertions below.

The first element of this framework- the notion that development policy discourses act as forms of regulation, or disciplines - relies on Michel Foucault's understanding of discipline (1979), Donzelot's explanation of philanthropy (1979), Stevens' analysis of the construction of the state through the family (1998), and Hansen's conclusions about language, policy and power (2000). In *Discipline and Punish* (1979), Foucault explains discipline as methods, including techniques, procedures, and targets, that allow for the control and subjection of the body. Foucault describes two images of discipline, one associated with penal institutions and the other with subtler, even invisible, mechanisms of control. The role of the "master of discipline" is to provide signals to subjects- both in the form of explicit laws and regulations as well as subtle techniques and messages. (1979, 166)

In writings that followed *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault elaborates on his conception of "discipline" focusing on biopower. While discipline is more concerned with the external forces of regulation enacted on the body, biopower examines self-discipline or the internal governance of subjects. In this way, biopower differs from discipline in the sense that it is a "power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them."(1981, 136)[17] Although I recognize the distinction made between

[17] I am also conscious of Foucault's understanding of governmentality in relation to discipline and biopower. While discipline is concerned with external mechanisms of power aimed at regulating the

discipline and biopower, I maintain that there are certain commonalities between the two concepts. The most obvious citation of this commonality is Foucault's claim that disciplinary techniques are employed both in explicit, judicial form and through subtle messages aimed at directing subjects toward certain behaviors. In effect, disciplines cannot be truly effective without the enactment of biopower. Recognizing the overlap between the concepts, throughout this dissertation, I have chosen to focus on Foucault's earlier conception of discipline rather than biopower. This decision stems from my focus on policy, law, and development programming- or what Foucault might have classified as overt public judicial mechanisms of discipline.

Despite my preference for Foucault's rendering of discipline offered in *Discipline and Punish*, I also rely heavily on *The History of Sexuality Volume I* (1980) in analyzing power. Foucault differentiates juridical power from "new methods of power whose operation is not ensured by right but by technique, not by law but by normalization, not by punishment but by control, methods that are employed on all levels and in forms that go beyond the state and its apparatus."(1978; 89) Foucault also distinguishes power as a "multiplicity of force relations," rather than an institution or a structure, or a "strength we are endowed with." (1979; 92-93) What is common between *The History of Sexuality* and *Discipline and Punish* is Foucault's treatment of the individual subject as an effect of power, or the creation of the masters of discipline. (1980)

A key element of Foucault's notion of power is its relationship to discourse. For Foucault, the most interesting and effective methods of power are exercised through the control of language. The creation of particular discourses spawns a set of subtle disciplinary

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subject, governmentality is more concerned with "the way a human being turns him - or herself - into a subject." (1980; 186). Governmentality is more concerned with the social context of regulation in contrast to the individual focus of disciplinary techniques. For further clarification see Mark Bevir (1999).

messages. In this way, understanding power relations does necessarily involve the examination of legal mechanisms and institutions; rather it begins by considering dominant discourses, the forces that serve to construct and perpetuate these discourses and the techniques and messages that are produced as a result of these disciplines.

Hansen also emphasizes the importance of language in power relations. Similar to my own work, Hansen is concerned with the policy language and the implicit and explicit power relationships that result from policies. In turn, exploring post-conflict development policies in Sierra Leone as disciplinary techniques requires that I focus on the language used within policy discourses and the power relationships that are instituted and regulated by particular policy-makers. I am concerned not just with the official, explicit structure of policies but also with the implicit messages and assumptions associated with the policies.

Specifically, here I draw from Stevens' work on the phenomenology of the natural. This notion can be understood as a novel reworking of Foucault's theorization of discipline and "the normalizing gaze." (1979) Foucault concluded that often what is considered "normal" is in fact highly regulated and controlled through discipline. In a similar way, Stevens argues that what is considered "natural" is in fact constructed and regulated, in part, through the disciplinary tactics of the state. Stevens also adds that the result of normalizing or naturalizing "is to express the necessity of a form of being or practice, to make something seem impervious to human intention and immutable."(Stevens 1999, 22) It follows that by rendering the family as a "natural" unit, it is also defined as necessary, unchanging, and outside the realm of political intervention. This logic has helped to produce and justify the distinction between the political (public) and "private" realms. In

addition, this logic legitimates non-interventionist approaches to sexual violence. (Stevens 1999, 218)

Because of their distance from the state apparatus, development actors not critiqued or held accountable in the same ways that recognized governments often are. For example, members of developing countries cannot elect or choose which development organization will operate in their country. Also, the spending practices of organizations are often determined by their donors rather than by their beneficiaries. Donzelot's work on philanthropy and the change in attitudes regarding tutelage provides strong footing from which to rethink the role of developers. In *The Policing of Families*, Donzelot asks "How was it possible to ensure the development of practices of preservation and formation of the population while at the same time detaching it from any directly political role and yet applying to it a mission of domination, pacification, and social integration?"(1979, 55) His answer to this question can be used to conceptualize how development organizations and agencies might achieve social control and regulation while at the same time distancing themselves from politics and the state.

Donzelot's response to his own question lies in his analysis of philanthropy. He concludes that philanthropy is "defined not as a political term signifying private intervention into social problems but a deliberately depoliticizing strategy for establishing public services and facilities at a sensitive point midway between private initiative and the state." (Donzelot 1979, 55) For Donzelot, the transition of philanthropy from generalized aid to targeted moralized interventions reflects the larger shift in the definition of "the social" from a problem of the poverty of others to a notion

of "general solidarity and the production of a life-style." (Deleuze 1979, xxvvii) Deleuze clarify's Donzelot's conception of the social as "the set of means which allow social life to escape material pressures and politico-moral uncertainties; the entire range of methods which make the members of a society relatively safe from the effects of economic fluctuations by providing a certain security." (1979, xxvi) Donzelot noted how philanthropy differed from charity in the sense that it was no longer directed to broad projects and groups of people; rather, philanthropy was intended to "save" groups of people from waste and mismanagement.

The shift Donzelot refers to relates to Duffield's conclusions about the current objectives of development. Rather than generalized responses to poverty and crisis, development- through measures such as tied aid and targeted aid- has increasingly exhibited specific social and moral objectives, including (re)establishing liberal social order, encouraging the establishment of liberal democratic values, and the stabilization and liberalization of the economy. "New humanitarianism" encapsulates this process whereby generalized, neutral development assistance is replaced with targeted, "politically conscious" aid aimed at societal transformation and governance. (Fox 2001, 275) New humanitarianism is presented as a novel approach to development capable of addressing the past failures of development initiatives through these types of targeted initiatives.

The objectives of new humanitarianism recalls Donzelot's explanation of the aim of philanthropy in 18th century France. Both new humanitarianism and philanthropy are processes of direct investment in society- with expected returns- rather than mere donations. In both conceptualizations, the return on the investment is said to be

guaranteed through the restrictions and regulations placed on the funding. The expected results for both "investments" were similar. As Deleuze summarizes, "the social comes into being with a system… in which norms replace the law, regulatory and corrective mechanisms replace the standard." (1979, xvi) Fiona Fox explains the result for new humanitarianism: "conditional humanitarian aid is becoming yet another tool available to Western governments to control developing countries." (Fox 284)

The second element of my framework examines development- particularly post-conflict (re)development- as a moment in which the production of "legitimate" subjects and behaviours occurs. According to Foucault, disciplinary techniques not only regulate but also produce "subjected and practiced bodies or 'docile' bodies." (1979:137, 215) Hansen's assumption that policy discourses construct problems, objects, and subjects at the same time as they articulate policies to address them exemplifies Foucault's conclusions about the power and disciplinary nature of discourses. In my approach, I am interested in the ways in which development policies produce subjects- particularly gendered subjects. Similar to Stevens and Hansen, I rely on Judith Butler's conception of gender as a set of characteristics and norms constructed through discourses.[18] Following Stevens' conclusion that "sex differences are constituted through, rather than constitutive of, political societies," (1998, 12) my own work assumes sex differences, and understandings of gender, are constituted through, rather than constitutive of, development policies. I am also concerned with how the construction of particular identities might exclude or silence others. Specifically, I explore how the construction of gendered identities within development discourses

[18] In *Gender Trouble* (1990) Butler establishes gender as a socially constructed and relational concept. It is not merely the attributes attached to "man" and "woman;" rather, it is fluid and ever-changing in relation to context and time.

might serve to legitimate and prioritize selective identities while excluding or silencing others.

Focusing on foreign policy, Hansen concludes that policies act as performances that bring certain identities into being while excluding or concealing others. Hansen is especially concerned with the destinies of excluded or "illegitimate" identities in a securitized context. Hansen is sympathetic to the Copenhagen School's understanding of security. Hansen recounts how the Copenhagen School's analysis of securitization depends on the notion that the speech act is an intersubjective act between the securitizing actors and an audience; however, she points out that if policies are selective in their construction of identities, and if only certain identities are rendered legitimate through policy discourses, the ability of those who have been excluded or deemed "illegitimate" to participate in this relationship and to articulate their concerns is limited. Hansen uses "security as silence" to refer to situations where a subject who faces a security concern has little or no means to articulate this concern. (2000a., 294)

Hansen points out that the Copenhagen school has ignored gender as a significant factor in the prioritizing of security concerns. Like Rita Abrahamsen (2005), Hansen points out that not all subjects are equally equipped to voice their concerns and that women, because of the hyper-masculine nature of security discourses, are particularly disadvantaged. (Hansen 2000 a., 2000b.) Hansen conceives of bride burnings in Pakistan and wartime sexual violence as instances whereby subjects did not possess the ability to make their concerns known to policy makers. Hansen argues that these subjects are disempowered first because of their gender and second because their concerns are deemed outside of the "national" security interests. Hansen notes that the

threats to security women typically face are more often deemed "individual" or "human security" concerns rather considered "national" security priorities. Hansen stresses the limitations to categorizing security:

> it remains crucial to emphasize that the discourse of 'national security' might silence women's security problems when 'women's problems' *conflict* with the securities of the national community. Thus, feminist studies must examine constructions of the relationship between gender and nation "not to make them correspond, but in order to analyze how the political structures of patriarchy and state sovereignty condition the way gender security can be thought. (2000b., 58-59)

Given Duffield's assertion that security and development have merged, it becomes essential to consider how securitized development policies might construct and react to gendered identities. Hansen has identified two sites of erasure for gendered identities in the process of policy making. First, in the process of constructing identities, policies simultaneously include as well as exclude or de-legitimize other identities. In a securitized arena, it is often gendered identities that are left out or rendered "illegitimate identities." Second, the intersubjective nature of security policies assumes that subjects are able to voice their concerns. There is, however, evidence to suggest that not all citizens- particularly those citizens whose fall in the category of "illegitimate identity"- can participate in this exchange; therefore they are once again excluded from the public realm of policy-making and politics.

The post-conflict period provides perhaps the most interesting period within which to examine how gendered identities are constructed through development policies.[19] The language of development policy discourses can be examined to

[19] Duffield is also interested in identity formation in the context of development. He notes how "new barbarism," or the notion that current conflict and ailments of the developing world are a result of cultural or "tribal" chaos, provides the impetus for NGOs and government funding agencies to justify establishing

determine what identities are considered legitimate by policy-makers as well as what identities might be excluded. The assumptions development policies make about women and men through their policies are indicative of the legitimate identities constructed through these policies. For example, if most development policies directed at soldiers assume a male beneficiary, there is an implicit message that female soldiers are not considered legitimate identities.

The third element to my theoretical approach is based an understanding that development policies create and solidify power relations. Here, Hansen and Foucault's work on disciplinary discourses and policy and Stevens' conclusions about the creation of the state are useful. Foucault explains that discipline is not merely aimed at punishment but also with the "repetition" and "redistribution" of the law, or, legitimating the current authority. (1979) Focusing on policy discourses, Hansen makes a comparable conclusion that policies not only construct particular identities but they also solidify the authority and legitimacy of the policy-maker.

Stevens also points to the family and the construction of the roles associated with the liberal family as a key indicator not only as to how gender is constructed but also as to how the state legitimizes itself and remains in power. She takes issue with the representation by the state of the family unit as pre-political and natural. (1998) She argues against the common understanding of the family as an organic unit rather than a construction. Stevens makes the case that the state requires a pre-political family unit in order to justify its existence and its interventions. The state creates rules and regulations, which appear to be a response to the natural family unit when in fact these

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"new forms of identity and social cohesion" in response to "problematised indigenous ways of doing things." (2001, 125)

rules create and construct the myth of the family. She argues: "the overlaying patterns of familial and political membership rules are the ones crucial to the reproductions of the nation, ethnicity, and race…" (1998, 9) Looking at the family and the state from this perspective demands serious reconsideration of previous ideas about nationhood, paternity and "legitimacy," as well as the significance of sexual intercourse in politics.

I draw on Stevens' conclusions about the state and the family and apply them to development policies.[20] Because my work examines the construction of gender and the construction of relationships of power "post"-conflict, focusing on the ways in which development policies might assume, construct, or institute the liberal family model is an essential part of my approach. The ways in which the mother/father axis and the mother/child axis are constructed and assumed by some development policies are indicative, both of the dominant understandings of gender and gender order, and development actors' own attempt to legitimize their roles and power relationships.

This leads to the fourth element of my approach, which stresses the relationship between sex and the body to power politics and emphasizes the significance of the family model in politics. Foucault identifies the deployment of sexuality and the surveillance of sex and the body as one of the most significant technologies of power. (1978) Rather than conceiving of sexuality as some natural set of characteristics that stem from biology, Foucault worked to demonstrate the historical construction of sexuality. Foucault demonstrates how the linking of sexuality to sex allows for the artificial grouping of elements such as "health, progeny, race, the future of the species,

[20] Duffield also emphasizes the ways in which development actors legitimize themselves through their policies and actions. He notes how the "reproblematisation of underdevelopment as dangerous, for example, can be seen as part of a moral rearming of the North. It both confines the causes of conflict to the South and helps provide the legitimation for outside involvement." (2001, 32)

the vitality of the social body" (1978, 147) with "anatomical elements, biological functions, conducts, sensations, and pleasures." (1978, 154) This linking indicates how the regulation of sex acts as a sort of "linchpin" that served to fuel capitalist economic growth, manufacture legitimacy, and "normalize" behaviour.

Like other disciplinary mechanisms, those directed at regulating sexuality take both an explicit judicial form and an implicit "normalizing" form. At the center of the history of sexuality and the disciplining of sexuality is the family model. Most of the "economic and political problems" associated with population, including birthrate, age of marriage, legitimate and illegitimate births, sexual relations, fertility or sterility, and the effects of the unmarried could be controlled through the institution of the family unit. (Foucault 1978, 25-26) Foucault- like Stevens- notes the significance of the "husband wife axis" and the "parents children axis" in the deployment of sexuality. (1978 108, 37) The "normalization" of these relationships through the creation and surveillance of the family represents one of the most significant yet largely undetected forms of sexual regulation. As Foucault noted, the "family was the crystallization in the deployment of sexuality: [it] seemed to be the source of sexuality which it actually only reflected and diffracted." (1978, 111) In other words, while the family appears to be a natural formation, it is in fact the product of a highly advanced set of regulatory mechanisms.

Donzelot applies Foucault's work on discipline and sexuality to the relationship of the family to the liberal state. Donzelot argues that the family is an "anchorage point for private property and function of reproduction of ruling ideology." (1979, xx) Donzelot also demands that the family be viewed not as a "manifest reality" but as a

product of power relations. (1979, xxv) Looking specifically at marriage and the regulation of children, Donzelot asks "what link is there between the extreme disparity of visions that we obtain of the family and the singular social value that is attributed to it?"(1979, 4) His answer lies in his account of the family as a transmitter of sanctioned social norms and regulations.

Looking first at marriage, Donzelot notes how unpaid domestic labor becomes the replacement of the dowry for women. The benefits of this trade for the state include the privatization of significant amounts of labor in addition to the privatization of certain aspects of social education (including hygiene) previously provided by the state. Finally, this arrangement made possible "a regularization of behavior, [the] lack of which explained the frequency of premature deaths, illness, and insubordination…" (1979, 35) This foundational relationship of the working class family provides the basis for the use of the family unit as a mechanism of governance. Donzelot explains, "the working-class family…was forged on the basis of a *turning back [rabattlement]* of each of its members onto the others in a circular relation of vigilance against the temptations from the outside…it was not exposed to the surveillance of its deviations from the norm."(1979, 45)

Due to the surveillance and governance opportunities offered through the working-class family model, it is defined by Donzelot as the smallest political organization possible (1979, 48). In turn, not belonging to a family is seen as a social problem and a source of potential instability and threat. Referring back to philanthropy, he argues that one of the major objectives of relief was to rehabilitate the family and "save" citizens from the potential of becoming vagabonds and beggars. (1979, 69)

Donzelot argues that through this process the family becomes a point of support for "reabsorbing individuals" while at the same time it becomes an agent for conveying the norms of the state into the private sphere…" (1979, 58) Thus, "the context was found in which to place the necessary construction of public services and facilities without their undermining the liberal definition of the state. (1979, 57) The focus on the family reflects both the conditions placed on 18th century French philanthropy and the current conditions placed on new humanitarianism. In both cases, the family unit is revered as a unit of assurance against disorganization, inefficiency, and insecurity.

Stevens also focuses on the depiction of the family unit as natural. She looks specifically at laws and regulations associated with birth and marriage. She points out that one's membership in a political society- or one's nationality- is almost always defined by where you are born and who your parents are: "political membership relies on invocations of birth and marriage." (1998, 7) Stevens concludes "birth is the paradigmatic decision rule for inclusion and exclusion into all political societies, including the modern state." (1998, 16) Given the significance of birth to the nation, it would appear that mothers should have significant political power as a result of their ability to give birth- or reproduce the nation. However, Stevens demonstrates how paternity and marriage laws serve to both control reproduction and to give power to husbands and fathers.

Stevens outlines three ways that marriage bestows males with significant power and rights over women and children. First, a woman's nationality or citizenship is partly determined by her husband's. Second, males have political rights to children produced by their wives. Third, the name and nationality of children in most societies is bestowed

through husbands. In turn, Stevens argues that one of the ways marriage serves to reproduce the state is by providing "the *legitimacy* that renders some children citizens and others aliens." (1998, 220) Stevens is adamant that the access and power that men gain through women formalizes relationships of gender inequality:

> rather than pre-existing sex differences being reflected in and exacerbated by laws, the very definition of matrimony suggests the institution is constitutive of inequity in roles related to reproduction, that marriage is an asymmetrical system assuring men access to mothers (mater), creating unrecognized and largely unrequited demands on women. (1998, 210)

Thus, through the regulation of marriage and birth the state constructs women as natural and pre-political and men as "heads" of households, or the natural "breadwinners." In effect, women are relegated to the private sphere of child-rearing and domestic work while men are situated in the political realm as administrators of the family unit.

This ordering that Foucault, Donzelot and Stevens refer to in relation to the regulation of sex is the focus of my analysis on development policies. I argue that policies that assume particular relationships between mothers and fathers, husbands and wives should be seen as constructing the liberal family model rather than responding to it. Further, development policies that identify their beneficiaries as "single mothers," "families," "orphan," or "father" are in fact constructing these identities and sending explicit messages to communities as to what are considered "normal" relationships and behaviours.

I also seek to think about development policies in the same way Donzelot does philanthropy. This means scrutinizing development activity as targeted "investments" in communities with expected "pay-offs." For the development community, these pay-offs might include the justification for their own existence and activity, the rewards of

establishing easily governable social units- or families, the global recognition gleaned from their apparently honourable and morally right initiatives, or the support they receive from donors keen on ensuring that their donations are directed at social change rather than squandered on generalized "charity."

Methodological Approach

My theoretical framework directly influenced the methods I deployed to conduct my research. My methodological approach is grounded in Foucault's conclusion that power and knowledge are joined together through discourse. Similarly, Hansen concludes "to understand language as *political* is to see it as a site for the production and reproduction of particular subjectivities and identities…." (2006, 18-19 emphasis in original) With the emphasis on language and the power of discourse in my theoretical approach, a critical discourse analysis became the most obvious and useful methodology for my dissertation. Moreover, feminist critical discourse analysis is appropriate given my focus on the constructions of the family and gender. My own application of discourse analysis is motivated by Foucault's question: "in a specific type of discourse on sex, in a specific form of extortion of truth, appearing historically and in specific places…what were the most immediate, the most local power relations at work? How did they make possible these kinds of discourses, and conversely, how were these discourse used to support power relations?" (1978, 97)

There certainly is no single definition of either discourse or discourse analysis; however, I am sympathetic to Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's approach to

it.(1985) Laclau and Mouffe base their view of discourse on Foucault's insights on the relationship between power and discourse. They agree that discourse is constructed through multiple networks, is historically situated, and places severe limits on what can and cannot be articulated. (1985) Laclau and Mouffe are perhaps most noted for their effort to abandon strictly defining discourse in relation to text. Instead, they argue that anything which can represent or convey meaning, including text, economic relationships, institutions, and technology should be considered part of "discourse." (Howarth and Torfing 2005)

Jacob Torfing effectively summarizes several aspects of Laclau and Mouffe's approach to discourse; (Howarth and Torfing 2005, 14-16) I am especially concerned with two of these. First, they point out how discourses are used to construct hegemonic political and moral ideals. According to Laclau and Mouffe, discourses should be analysed "both in terms of their ability to shape and reshape meaning and in terms of their ultimate failure to provide a homogenous space of representation." Second, drawing on Gramsci, Laclau and Mouffe argue that hegemonic discourses can become "dislocated" as a result of new ideas or events that cannot be explained within its boundaries. Dislocation influences hegemonic actors to attach floating signifiers- or words that are no longer attached to readily understood concepts (empowerment, or gender mainstreaming, for example)- in relation to a new set of "nodal points" or dominant ideas that structure hegemonic ideas (globalization, development, or post-conflict, for example). Laclau and Mouffe conclude that these new concepts will largely take the form of empty universals, which typically appeal "to vaguely defined notions

such as Revolution, Modernisation, the Nation or the People…" (Laclau and Mouffe in Howarth and Torfing 2005, 16)

The basic premises of discourse analysis are relevant to feminist objectives to deconstruct patriarchal assumptions and to question gendered identities. Michel Lazar identifies the aim of feminist critical discourse analysis as "radical social transformation based on social justice that opens up unlimited possibilities both for women and men as human beings..." (2007, 15-16) Lazar and feminist theorists such as Judith Butler argue that power is performed through language, and gender and gendered power relations are continually performed through discourses. Lazar explains that feminist discourse analysis is also concerned with multiple mediums, including text, spoken language, visual images and gestures. (2007, 13) Feminist critical discourse analysis is also very much focused on the emancipatory potential of discourse. Fuelled by the notion that deconstructing or altering hegemonic discourses can result in ideological and moral shifts, feminist discourse analysis is aimed at locating discourses that sustain or construct patriarchy- that is, relationships of subordination or suppression for women- in order to locate spaces for resistance.

In this dissertation I utilize a multi-data approach. Essentially, a multi-data approach allows for the inclusion of multiple types and sources of discourse. Based on the assertion that discourse can be constructed through multiple means, including policy, the media, interviews, and academic literature, a multi-data approach can account for broad ranging research. Allan Dreyer Hansen and Eva Sorensen (2005, 93-116) recommend a multi-data approach because of the "inevitable limits to sources." Focusing on text, Lene Hansen also notes the importance of reading large number of

texts from a wide variety of sources. (2006, 52) In this dissertation I include the analysis of government reports and laws[21], non-government organization (NGO) and international development agency policy documents and research reports,[22] and existing research on female soldiers and sexual violence in Sierra Leone.

Adhering to my theoretical approach, which places significance on the voices of the subaltern, I have analyzed interviews with female soldiers, current and former government officials, non-government organization (NGO) and international development agency employees, and community members who were willing to share their stories.[23] The interviews with former female soldiers are the central focus of much of the dissertation. Although most of the women interviewed were participants in the same program for former female soldiers in central Sierra Leone, the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences with fighting forces during the civil war provides one of the few representative direct accounts of the roles and experiences of female soldiers in Sierra Leone. There were two groups of interviewees: one group of 50 women were all part of a United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) project in Makeni, located in north of Freetown in the fifth most populous province; another group of 25 women were not in any recognized program and were living in Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown, about 100 miles southwest of Makeni. All 75 interviewees are all between the ages of 18-32, which means some were child soldiers during the conflict. These women were members of a variety of armed factions including the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), the Sierra Leone Army, and the

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[21] This includes an analysis of Sierra Leone's marriage and adoption laws and an analysis of government policies related to the disarmament process and marriage and childbirth.
[22] These include the policy documents from organization such as COOPI, CAW, Human Rights Watch, CEDAW, and Caritas Makeni.
[23] See Appendix #5 for a detailed outline of interviewees.

Kamajors[24] and participated in the conflict for periods extending from 2 weeks to 10 years.

I received ethics approval from the University of Alberta to ask very specific and limited questions to these women.[25] The ethical limitations were essential for this research for several reasons: first, it was necessary that my questions did not require the interviewees to delve into personal and potentially traumatic information; and, second I was required to protect the identity of the interviewees and ensure that their identities and stories would not be linked together. The limitation of these questions was that they inhibited more informal discussions and my ability to ask for elaboration from women on certain points. I made every effort to make the interviews seem as "conversation-like" and informal as possible; however, this was not always possible.

In effort to make interviewees feel comfortable, safe, and secure, interviews with former soldiers were conducted in pairs in the presence of a social worker. I chose to interview the women in pairs because I felt it diminished the formal atmosphere of a one on one interview. Local social workers that had worked with these women supported this decision and suggested that I allow the women to choose their interview partners; this way, women were interviewed with someone they felt comfortable with. In many cases, having two women together made the interview feel more like a group conversation rather than a strict direct question-answer format.

The social worker present acted as my translator for interviewees that answered in three of the over twenty languages spoken in Sierra Leone: Krio, Mende, or Temne. Krio is a *lingua franca* spoken across the country, particularly in Freetown, the

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[24] The Kamajors were an armed militia group primarily consisting of members of the Mende ethnic group.
[25] See appendix #1 for a detailed account of the questions asked during my field research interviews.

Peninsula and the Banana and York islands; Mende is spoken in the south central areas, and Themne in the Northern Province. There were both benefits and disadvantages to having social workers act as translator. In terms of benefits, the women had already shared details of their experience to the social worker so they were not "double disclosing" to myself and another stranger (an official translator). Second, the social worker was able to brief me as to the appropriateness or sensitivity of questions. I followed any advice of the social workers regarding omitting questions or stopping the interview. The disadvantages of having the social workers translate primarily resulted from their familiarity with the interviewees. At times, the social worker would want to answer for the women because they knew the answer or could "fill in" extra detail they felt the women had left out. When this happened I stopped interviews to remind the social workers that they were required to translate verbatim. This process was certainly not perfect; however, I have every assurance from the social workers that the final translations are accurate.

The approach I took in conducting interviews was particularly sensitive to feminist critiques of, and recommendations for, interview techniques. Adler and Worrall summarize the critical feminist argument that women's stories, and the way they are told, can provide the most valuable sources of "evidence" of the structures of power within society and women's and girl's experiences within those structures:

> violence stories are powerful vehicles conveying information about girls' views and normative beliefs concerning violence. In telling such stories, girls draw on their personal and emotional experiences, and their wider cultural and social life, to convey feelings of both powerlessness and empowerment…Examining how girls *speak* about violence allows us to trace the multiplicity of ways in which it connects with and impacts upon other areas of their (gendered) lives, and enables us to see the ways in which actual and threatened violence structures daily social interactions. (Adler and Worrall 2004, 83)

While in the field in Sierra Leone I also drew upon observation methods during my interviews. This involved observing particular patterns of reactions, including facial expressions, discomfort, fear, or silences. These non-textual and non-verbal cues were incredibly informative; in some cases I chose to eliminate, alter, or reword questions based on these indicators. The observation approach is also relevant because it recognizes the significance of the interviewer's position during the interview process, and her/his potential to affect the responses from interviewees.

I include as much of my primary research as possible in the following chapters. Where appropriate, I have incorporated larger sections of interview material in order to allow the reader to "hear" the voices of the female soldiers I interviewed. In order to give readers both an historical and contemporary context to my research, in the following chapter, I provide a historical overview of Sierra Leone. This chapter concentrates on the history of sexual regulation and Sierra Leone's civil conflict and demobilization process.

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Chapter Two
Sex and Conflict in Sierra Leone

If de clause day- O ye big men
O ye men who go to Church;
O ye m[illegible] who get the money:
O ye men who get the voice;
Stand up- wake up- things day bad, mind
Save de little girls from death
Save de Creole girls from ruin [26]

Sierra Leone's history is as rich as it is complex. There are several reasons why a brief review of the historical context of Sierra Leone is essential for understanding the content of this dissertation. First, while the following chapters focus primarily on recent political history and the current policy environment, this chapter provides the reader with a context within which to consider this information. A second reason is to make sense of social practices that predated European intervention, so as not to locate Sierra Leone's history only or always about colonial-centred knowledge. A third reason is to be able to reflect upon historical continuities and discontinuities- particularly in relation to sexual governance, family structures and law, and the status of women and girls in Sierra Leone. This chapter provides an overview of the historical context of Sierra Leone with a focus on what information is available on gender ordering and sexual regulation. This chapter is not meant to be a comprehensive overview of Sierra Leone's history; rather, it should highlight to the reader the socio-political context of gender ordering and sexual regulation in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone is situated on the west coast of Africa. It is bordered by beautiful beaches and the Atlantic Ocean to the west, Liberia to the south and Guinea to the

[26] Kriole poem, "For Dear Father Land" translated: O you important men, O you men who go to Church, O you men who have the money; O you men who have influences; Stand up- wake up- things are bad, listen; Save the little girls from death; Save the Creole girls from ruin. (Phillips 2006, 207)

north. With a population of over 5 million people, Sierra Leone has remained at the bottom of the United Nations' Human Development Index for well over a decade. Its struggling economy, with a gross domestic product per capita of $806, is primarily based on diamond mining and small-scale manufacturing. Despite the gloomy reports for Sierra Leone's development, Sierra Leone has witnessed some major successes in the past few years including its presidential election in 2007- its second peaceful and democratic presidential election since the end of the civil war.

Long before colonizers stepped foot on the territory that is now identified as Sierra Leone, assorted ethno-cultural groups, dominated by the Mende, Temne and Limba, were established in the area. The region was also home to distinctive groups who had migrated from North and East Africa over centuries. (Knorr 2000, 22) Tribes were organized under a chiefdom system whereby a local chief ruled each major region. Most ethnic groups practiced some form of animism while Islam was introduced early to the northern regions of Sierra Leone, and eventually- through colonization- Christianity was brought to the region.

Gender Norms and Ordering in Sierra Leone

My dissertation argues that there are continuities and discontinuities in current sexual norms and regulations related to gender in Sierra Leone. A look at secret societies can provide some insights into historical and contemporary gender roles in Sierra Leone. Societies are viewed as a right of passage for the girls and boys of a community. When a child is nearing adulthood, he or she will be initiated into one of the local secret societies- usually the society that his/her parents belong to. The sole definition of adulthood for some communities in Sierra Leone rests on initiation and

membership in a secret society. Momoh explains, "If you have a boy of 15 that goes through a local ceremony to adulthood …and another man of 60 who has not gone through the same ceremony, you treat the 15 year old as a man to be respected and as the elder." (Momoh 2005) Due to the significance of membership, exclusion from secret societies can be detrimental. Not only is membership required to be considered an adult, it also is a source of respect, trust, a requirement for leadership, and a foundation for many trade and business relationships. (Little in Turnball 1973, 257-287) A Mende woman summarized the importance of membership: "If you don't belong to the secret soc [sic] up in the provinces, you cannot make any decisions, and you would be excluded from positions of authority, no matter how old you are….If you are not a member of the Society, oh I tell you, you feel so left out." (Knorr 2000, 85)

Traditional secret societies are organized according to sex rather than ethnicity. The female only groups are often referred to as Bundu or Sande societies while the male only groups are called Poro. (Knorr 2000, 90-94) Most accounts indicate that the average age of initiation into the societies is anywhere from 12-18; however, because of poverty or the disruption of practices due to conflict, these ages have fluctuated dramatically over the years. Because the historical roots of the societies extend well before colonial time, the Creoles- the landed population of freed slaves- did not participate in secret societies. Some Creoles have regarded these groups as "backward"; in particular, Creoles have been critical of the tradition of circumcising both male and

female inductees. In addition, there has been increased international pressure on female secret societies to discontinue circumcision in their initiation practices.[27]

Both the male and female secret societies focus on teaching their members local history as well as training them with relevant skills for survival and success. Although the details of each society are "secret," it is generally known that male members are taught skills such as hunting, harvesting palm oil, climbing trees, catching animals, and building houses. (Shiaka 2005, Momoh 2005) Female societies train women in skills such as cooking, breast-feeding and child rearing, and running a household. (Tarawally 2005) The practices and structures of each society vary according to geography; societies teach their members skills that are relevant to their particular region or period of time. For example, Father Joseph Momoh, a Sierra Leonean Priest explained that some secret society training was "war like" to teach members how to fight because "the community develop[ed] its identity through war." (Momoh 2005) He also reported that some societies teach signs and signals known only to that particular group and members use these indigenous communication skills to signal to one another on the road or during conflict. (Momoh 2005)

The Colonization of Sierra Leone

In the following section, I provide an overview of how Sierra Leone came to be colonized, by whom, and some legacies with a specific focus on prostitution, family law, and marriage. This context informs subsequent discussions of current sexual regulation and sexual ordering in Sierra Leone and my claim that current gender norms are partially reflective of Sierra Leone's colonial legacies. Sierra Leone's colonial era

[27] The World Health Organization has identified female genital mutilation (FGM) as a major health concern. Specific groups aimed at stopping FGM and raising awareness includes FORWARD, Care2, and the FGM National Clinic Group.

began with the establishment of Freetown as a British post and a settlement for former slaves in 1787. It was identified as an official Crown Colony in 1808. (Hirsh 2001A) Descriptions of the early years of colonial Sierra Leone vary from a stunning paradise to the "white man's grave"- in reference to the number of settlers who died of various tropical diseases. (Phillips 2006, 119) For years Sierra Leone flourished as a colony with the establishment of the Fouray Bay College, the first university in Western Africa, numerous newspapers, and with the discovery of natural resources. During the 1800's Freetown was deemed "the Athens of West Africa."

Sierra Leone's history is shaped by waves of regional and international migration. After the abolition of slavery, Freetown was designated as the future home for freed slaves. In addition to freed slaves from the Americas, Freetown was home to African Americans transferred Nova Scotia, Afro-Caribbeans, Arab traders, slaves captured on shipping vessels by the British, a small number of British merchants, a powerful group of Lebanese traders, and British military personnel. (Philips 2006) The diverse groups of Africans that had arrived in Freetown became uniformly known as Creoles. The Creole language was a confection inspired by English and the various dialects of the settlers.

British colonizers tended to distinguish the Creoles from "the natives"- or, the some 14 existing ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. The Creoles, or "trousered blacks" (Adebajo, Adekeye and David Keen 2007, 204) were considered an elite class largely because they had descended from liberated Africans who were seen to have "cultivated [Western/British] habits and [had] come to accept their way of living." (Porter, 1963) By some accounts, the British saw Creoles as partners in their mission to civilize West

Africa. (Adebajo, Adekeye and David Keen 2007, 203) This categorization, combined with the fact that most Creoles lived in the Crown Colony (the Freetown area) as opposed to "the provinces" (areas outside Freetown were not included in the colony until 1896), offered Creoles significant advantages over the rest of the population in Sierra Leone. According to the 1931 census, over half of all children enrolled in schools lived in the Freetown area. (Gberie 2005, 205) Although Creoles constitute only 2-3% of the current population in Sierra Leone, they remain a significant portion of the country's political and economic elite.

Similar to other British colonial projects, one of the objectives for colonial administrators in Sierra Leone was to "civilize" the local population through education and the alteration or elimination of "traditional" social practices. Gberie has argued that the British regarded its colony in Sierra Leone as "an experiment in 'conversionism.'" (Gberie 2005, 18-19) The tools of conversion not only included education but also the introduction of religion and legal codes to restrict colonial subjects. Historian Leo Spitzer summarized the colonizers' belief that "social redemption and elevation of submerged groups would not occur through the removal of legal disabilities alone: that the state or established religious, philanthropic or educated institutions would be required to bring about the integration and social adjustment of the emancipated." (Spitzer 1989, 18-19) For this dissertation, the ways in which the British enacted their moral superiority and used it to justify their regulation of the colony in relation to sexuality and the family is particularly relevant.

Colonization and Sexual Regulation

The regulation of sex and sexuality was an important aspect of the colonial project. Works on sexual regulation by theorists such as Michel Foucault, Jacqueline Stevens, and Jacques Donzelot have informed a growing subfield of feminist and critical studies. Foucault has argued that sexuality "is not the most intractable element in power relations, but rather one of those endowed with the greatest instrumentality: useful for the greatest numbers of manoeuvres and capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies." (1978, 103) Authors such as James Morris and Richard Phillips have pointed out the connections between the regulation of sexuality and imperial power. In "Sex, politics and empire: a postcolonial geography" Phillips concludes: "Colonisation schemes were organised around sexual arrangements." (2006, 2) Lenore Manderson also argues that colonial authorities used sex as a basis to justify what he calls the "moral logic of colonialism." (Manderson 1997, 373) In particular, Mariarosa Dalla Costa has argued that colonizers worked to create and enforce the nuclear family unit because of the administration and economic benefits. (1995) Harris also noted that the heterosexual nuclear family was considered the building block for agricultural colonisation of various parts of the world. (Harris 1977, 469-483)

i. Prostitution

An examination of the regulation of prostitution in colonial Sierra Leone can provide a useful glimpse into the priority that sexual regulation held for colonial administrators, the assumed moral superiority of the British, and the way in which the British characterized the African female subject. Josephine Butler, an advocate of

legalizing prostitution in the British Empire, argued "the way people and government treated prostitutes and other sexual outsiders – a category in which we might include sexually active younger people and those with lovers of the same sex or a different race- spoke volumes about their domestic and imperial society, about the way it was and the way they wanted it to be." (Philips 2006, 1) Prostitution was deemed a necessary aspect of colonial life in part due to the high number of single males sent to administer the colonies. Despite the acceptance of prostitution, there is a great deal of evidence indicating that colonial authorities were determined to regulate it. (Levine 2003, 227)

Prostitution was generally regulated under Contagious Disease (CD) laws; however, these laws were never passed in Sierra Leone. This aberration in British colonial practice has been explained as a financial decision resulting from the prevalence and uncontrollability of prostitution. (Philips 2006, 122) Instead of CD laws, the British enacted numerous regulations "to improve public morals," including banning public nudity and dancing after dark and walking or loitering in any thoroughfare or public place for the purposes of prostitution. (Philips 2006, 127) Prostitutes were not charged for their sexual activity; rather they were charged with "loitering with intent." (Philips 2006, 128) The focus of this law says much about how colonizers viewed African women and sex. The charge had nothing to do with a sexual act but for walking publicly, indicating that the regulations surrounding prostitution had more to do with the regulation of women within public spaces as it did with sexual activity.

There are other indications that colonial governors wanted to control the public activity of African women in response to the perceived threatening potential of their unregulated sexual behaviour. The image of the African subject as highly sexualized

and lacking moral restraint informed both the specific regulations associated with prostitution and the general "moral logic" of colonial missions. (Crowder 1968) In fact, it has been argued that the legitimization of the colonial mission was dependent on the sexualization of the would-be colonial subject. (Philips 2006,130) Richard Burton's work exemplifies this argument. An English traveller and author, Burton wrote of a "great gulf, moral and physical, separating the black from the white races of man." (Burton 1883, 187) Burton's construction of African women as "vicious" and the men as "bestial" was said to have informed Sierra Leone's colonial officials. (Burton 1883) Burton's writings also influenced larger discourses on African sexuality and broader debates about the moral justification for colonialism at the time. In particular, Burton described Sierra Leone as a region of "primal disorder" characterized by "savagery" and immorality- a place "effectively awaiting colonization." (Philips 2006, 182)

ii. Marriage

British regulation of sex involved more than the regulation of prostitution. For Sierra Leone, the promotion of the heterosexual nuclear family model was a key colonial objective. Similar to learning to eat with knives and forks, and covering their bodies with clothing, colonial administrators and missionaries saw marriage as essential to the civilizing mission. There was a particular emphasis on eradicating polygamy and female circumcision and replacing "fluid" customary unions with legally defined marriages. (Thomas 1998; Allman 2000) With colonial authorities devoting attention to enforcing recognized models of marriage and missionaries and "purity campaigners" concentrating on marriage unions, marriage became what K. Mann called a "virtual

obsession" in West Africa during the late 19th century (Mann 1985, 71). An Anglican Bishop summarized the church's position on marriage:

> the Great desideratum in the social life of the colony is the sanctity of the marriage relationship, and the creation and maintenance of home and family life…the comparative absence of the ideas of love and fellowship from the marriage tie, utterly wrong views about the relative duties of husband and wife, tend to encourage concubinage, and this degrades women from her true place, becomes the fruitful source of strife and disunion, and children dragged up under these circumstances are apt to see and hear much that is most unfortunate. (Ingham 1894, 316)

This quotation reiterates the emphasis placed on recognized, Christian marriages in the colonial project.

Family Law

Efforts to encourage "recognized" marriage- that is, legal marriage- did not end with the colonial period. Since the 1950s, the Sierra Leone government has made great efforts to standardize the various types of marriages that exist within the country. (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 8) In Sierra Leone there are three types of marriages that correspond with three different codes and rules: legal marriage, customary marriage, and ordained marriage. These are sometimes referred to as registry marriages, cultural marriages, and religious marriages respectively. In a research report on family law conducted in the 1970s, the authors noted "the absence of an effective method of recognizing the legal status of these marriages leads to many problems, including problems of maintenance, legitimacy, bigamy and inheritance." (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdrorp 1975, 12)

An analysis of the laws regulating the family is complicated by the fact that, as a result of the damage and chaos caused by the conflict, as well as the lack of resources and attention given to maintaining records, many of the laws regulating the family are

"scattered around" or have "gone out of print." (Shiaka 2005) This means, literally, that some copies of various legal documents cannot be located because the remaining paper copies of the documents are lost or have been destroyed.

The second source of complication in understanding the laws regulating sex and the family relates to the separation of the official colony of Sierra Leone with the rest of the country, or 'the provinces.' The result of this bifurcation was that the vast majority of Sierra Leoneans were never under direct colonial rule and not subject to colonial law. This meant that customary law was, and continues to be, the most recognized system for the majority of Sierra Leoneans. Although Customary Law Marriages were equated in law with Civil and Christian Marriages after 1965, there remain some essential differences among these forms, particularly in terms of inheritance rights and paternity rights. (Nicol 2001, 61) A brief review of laws relating to marriage, childbirth and custody provide a great deal of insight into the status of women in Sierra Leone, the ways in which sex and childbirth have been regulated, and the role of sex and paternal rights in determining the power and status of a man.

i. Marriage

Cultural marriages involve traditional practices such as the breaking of a kola knot.[28] Religious marriages may take place at Christian churches or Mosques, and registry marriages are marriages that are legally registered with the government ministry in Freetown. Although all marriages are binding and recognized, registered marriages are distinct for two main reasons. First, registered marriages are the only type of marriage certified by a government institution. Second, registry marriages are the only type that legally assures women access to her husband's property upon his death.

[28] A rope is tied around a kola fruit and the two parties pull either side of the rope to break the kola.

Customary law is much more explicitly patriarchal than civil law. Under customary law, a woman must always be under the protection of a male- typically either her father or her husband. (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 27) Customary marriage also prevents women from obtaining rights over marital property. According to customary law, marital property, including children, belongs to the husband and his family. Women who cohabitate with a man but never undergo any recognized form of marriage also have no inheritance rights. If there are children from this union, they also may not benefit from their father's estate. (Nicol 2001, 69)

Sierra Leone has 4 major tribes: Kriole, Shabu, Timne, and Mende. Of these 4 tribes, only the Sherbro tribe is matrilineal.[29] For the other 3 tribes, male children are prioritized and the oldest son inherits the wealth and property of a family. Also, if a woman's husband dies, it is typically her husband's brother who will inherit the husband's wealth and property- unless the husband and wife have a male child who is considered an adult.[30] Customary law solidifies sexual relations within marriage as the only legitimate and authorized type of sexual activity. What's more, under customary law it is always an offence for a man to have sex with a woman to whom he is not married, regardless of the age of the woman or her consent. (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 57) Women can charge their husbands with abuse under the Offences Against the Persons Act of 1861; however, it is estimated that less than half of cases are

[29] It is important to note that matrilineal societies, or societies where inheritance rights pass through the female line of the family, are not the same as matriarchal societies, or societies where social relationships prioritize and valorize females. A matrilineal society may still be patriarchic.

[30] The definitions of 'child' and 'adult' vary from tribe to tribe and from region to region in Sierra Leone. For example, a former British act called "The Young People's Act" identified anyone over 16 as an adult; another law designates 14 as the threshold between childhood and adulthood. Traditionally, in some Chiefdoms both male and female children go through initiation ceremonies which can include female genital mutilation, training in local hunting procedures, and learning about the history of the tribe. These ceremonies dictate the transition from childhood to adulthood but can be performed at a variety of different ages depending on the physical development of the child and the financial resources of the family.

reported and less than a third of reported cases ever reach the courts- particularly in cases of sexual violence. (Nicol 2001, 72) In some areas in Sierra Leone domestic abuse, is viewed as "the overt show of a man's love for his wife." (Nicol 2001, 71) In Chapter Three I argue that the establishment of sex outside marriage as an offence and as a taboo formed the basis for its effectiveness as a tool of war.

ii. Childbirth and Custody

The customary and civil laws regulating paternity and custody in Sierra Leone are fascinating and complex. One report summarizes the basic premise of these laws:

> Rights over the procreative services of a woman are vested in her paternal family until they are transferred at marriage to her husband and his family. If a girl has a child before marriage, her family, not having transferred these rights to any man, would be in a position to claim damages from the man who has trespassed on their rights and to claim the child. Ideally, of course, in the traditional village society, all women past puberty should be married, thus avoiding such a situation. (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 44)

By law and convention, children are the property of males in Sierra Leone. Husbands have the right to acknowledge, as their legitimate child, any offspring born to their wives, regardless of who is the biological father. (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 20) If a child is born as a result of an affair, legally, the husband has what amounts to "first right of refusal." This means that the husband can legally claim the child as his, if he chooses. If he does not recognize the child, then the biological father may recognize the child as "his" and register the birth.[31] If neither occurs then the child falls into legal limbo with respect to inheritance and succession rights.

[31] This mirrors British common law.

There is no exact concept in customary law directly comparable to "legitimacy" within Sierra Leone's legal system; however the following cases cover those children whose "legitimacy" is solidified in terms of rights of succession and inheritance.

1. A child born to parents who are legally married.
2. A child fathered by a man other than a wife's husband but who is explicitly acknowledged by the legal husband as his own. (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 45)

This short list defining 'legitimate' children in Sierra Leone can be contrasted to the vast list of categories of children whose paternity and therefore inheritance and succession rights can easily be disputed. According to the report "Family Law in Sierra Leone," (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 45-49) This list is as follows:

1. An extra-marital child, not acknowledged by its mother's legal husband.
2. Children born to a union, which has had the consent of the families but where dowry and other ceremonial traditions have not been completed.
3. A child born to a betrothed girl and fathered by the intended husband
4. A child born to a betrothed girl and fathered by a man other than the man to whom she is betrothed.
5. A child born to a married woman and fathered by her partner in a 'caretaker marriage'[32]
6. A child born to a divorced woman and fathered by her partner in a 'debtor-creditor marriage'[33]
7. A child born to a widow who has been 'inherited' or married by a male relative of the deceased husband, and fathered by another man.
8. A child born to an unmarried girl for whom no marriage has been arranged and fathered by an unmarried man who does not intend to marry the girl.
9. A child born to a married or divorced woman and fathered by a man who neither is nor has been the woman's husband but who registers the birth as that of his own child.
10. A child whose mother is married by customary law, and who was fathered by her husband whose personal law is customary law but who is married by statutory law to another woman.

[32] A caretaker marriage or caretaker unions consist of women estranged or separated from their husbands who become involved in a conjugal union. It is described as "caretaker" marriage because the male partner takes over the role of caretaker in place of the previous husband and the family.

[33] This describes a situation where a woman wishes to divorce her husband but is unable to pay back the initial dowry. The husband can suggest that the women attain the money by finding a wealthy man and pledging her services until the debt is paid.

11. A child whose mother is unmarried and who was fathered by a man already married under statutory law.

Although most regulations associated with custody and adoption also stem from cultural or traditional norms and customs, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs has increasingly tried to intervene and enforce various practices. It is common for women married by customary law who are seeking maintenance for their children to sue under the Bastardy Act.[34]

Dehengue Shiaka, from the Ministry of Social welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, explained that in cases of divorce, the Ministry will investigate the parents and decide if the father is capable of caring for the child. In most cases, they deem the mother to be the best possible parent for the child. The rationale for this is that the mother is "more naturally prepared to mother" or take care of and raise children and that fathers are often too busy working to care for children. In these cases, if the father requests custody of a child after he/she reaches the age of 10, custody is usually granted to him. (Shiaka 2005) The rationale for this switch from the mother to the father is that, after the age of 10, the child is better able to take care of himself/herself and that the father is more likely than the mother to have the financial resources to further the child's education and to provide him/her with various opportunities.

One area of law that is currently under review relates to the practice of adoption. Traditionally in Sierra Leone, if a mother cannot raise her child or dies, the father's parents will raise the child. Children born during the conflict represent new challenges to this traditional practice. First, children may be born as a result of rape or gang rape. In this case the father may not be known, or there may be no relationship or sense of

[34] This refers to Bastardy Laws Amendment Act of 1972 and The Bastardy Laws Increase of Payments Act of 1961.

obligation between the father and the child. Second, children may be born as a result of consensual sex during the conflict between an unmarried couple. In this case, the father's family may reject the child as a bastard because there had been no recognized marriage. Third, the location of the father and his family may not be known, either as a result of the mass displacement of the population during the conflict (over 1 million people were displaced from their homes), or as a result of the high number of deaths during the conflict.

After the war there was an increase in the number of women with children who were either unmarried, did not know the father, did not want to locate the father, or who had been rejected by the family of the father; however, there have been no legal or customary frameworks to address this situation. In addition, under customary law, foster parents or those who informally adopt children have no legal rights over any person who, in the future, may wish to make claims to a child based on blood ties. (Harrell-Bond and Rijnosdorp 1975, 52) This makes families more reluctant to adopt or to foster despite the increased need for such families. In response, post-conflict, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's affairs began altering the existing "Bastardy Act" (now called the adoption act) to attempt to legally address children born into the above mentioned circumstances. As of June 2007, the Ministry was still tabling this document.

The Conflict

Sierra Leone's 11 year civil conflict is nearly impossible to summarize due to the large number of coups, the diverse fighting factions and leaders, the various UN and international interventions and actions, and the changing degrees of brutality and horror

that characterized this period. Numerous authors and researchers commenting on the conflict in Sierra Leone have concluded that these 11 years were the century's most violent and vicious. (Wessels and Davidson 2006) In fact, explanations of the sources of the conflict are often overshadowed by fantastical descriptions of Sierra Leone as a location of unearthly Armageddon. Sierra Leone has been depicted by authors such as Robert Kaplan as "barbaric," exhibiting "new age primitivism" and "pre-modern." (Kaplan 1994) Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's foreign policy advisor Robert Cooper conveyed a seemingly common image of West Africa when he declared that the "pre-modern world of failed states… of 'barbarians, chaos and disorder'" poses a threat to Western civilisation because "it can provide a base for non-state actors who may represent a danger to the post-modern world." (Cooper in Gberie 2005, 9)

More cerebral accounts of Sierra Leone's history and conflict tend to link the sources of the conflict to the legacies of colonialism, international and local exploitation of resources, systemic government corruption, extreme poverty and inequality, and the outside influence of Charles Taylor from Liberia, rather than merely "tribalism" or endemic chaos. David Keen argued that it was the combination of the absence of employment opportunities, growing poverty in the face of corruption and a decrepit state that inspired men and women to join armed groups. (2005) For Keen, rebel groups and the Sierra Leone army offered protection and resources that were unavailable to Sierra Leone's civilians. Lansana Gberie, a journalist who covered the Sierra Leone conflict, has also written extensively about how rebels were enticed by the prospect of controlling Sierra Leone's diamond wealth. This hypothesis has been supported by a number of experts, including Ibrahim Kamara, Sierra Leone's Permanent

Representative to the UN during the conflict. Kamara has been quoted as saying that the root of his country's war "is, and remains diamonds, diamonds and diamonds." (in Barbara Crossette 2000)

i. Fighting Forces

The main groups of fighting forces that were involved in the Sierra Leone conflict included the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Civil Defence Force (CDF) or the Kamajors, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and the Sierra Leone Army. The CDF were a paramilitary group who supported the Sierra Leone Army against the RUF. The CDF fought alongside and often mixed with the Kamajors, originally a Mende male hunting group which developed into a fighting faction to defend civilians. The Kamajors were often described as a mystical battle group because some believed that magical water and rituals would make them invincible to bullets. The Kamajors' name comes from 'Kamajoi,' a Mende word meaning hunter, and was originally an exclusively male only group; however, there are some indications that women participated as Kamajor soldiers. By March 1994 it was estimated that there were over 500 Kamajors involved in combat activity. (Gberie 2005, 85) It has been argued that abuses conducted by the Kamajors during the war were largely overlooked because of their image as defenders of civilians. (Adebajo and Keen 2007, 252) There were also some concerns that the Kamajors were not included in the disarmament process at the end of the conflict. (Adebajo and Keen 2007, 252)

The RUF is the most notorious armed group and was the primary rebel force for the entire 11 year conflict. It is reported that some original RUF rebel commanders such as Foday Sankoh received military training in Libya; however this link has been

contested by a number of researchers. (Adebajo and Keen 2007, 253) The RUF was largely a product of Charles Taylor and his desire to influence the politics and diamond industry of Sierra Leone. Original members of the RUF were unemployed or underemployed young men who were attracted by promises of diamond wealth and political power. Throughout the conflict, the membership of the RUF expanded and diversified to include a large number of children (many abducted), women and girls, and disgruntled members of the national army. The stated objective of the RUF was to liberate civilians from a corrupt government; however their mission was indistinct and overshadowed by greed, violence, and brutal displays of power. (Koroma 1996; Reno 1998) Several accounts of the RUF conclude that the group manifested disaster and horror rather than revolution. (Abdullah 2004)

The Sierra Leone Army certainly morphed into a variety of forms over the years of conflict. As already mentioned, a number of SLA members who were dissatisfied with low wages and poor conditions joined the RUF at various stages of the war. There were also members of the SLA who maintained their status as members of government forces but collaborated with RUF members and participated in rebel activity such as diamond mining, looting, and sexual violence. These "sobels"- soldiers by day and rebels by night- served to diminish the authority of the government and destabilized civilian trust in government forces.

The Sierra Leone Army was supported by several different groups throughout the civil war. Ecomog, the Monitoring Group for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), was sent in as an intervening force during the early stages of the conflict. (Bariagaber 2006, 18) Led by Nigerians, Ecomog had several successes

in Sierra Leone including ousting the AFRC in 1998 and maintaining control over the airport during the worst periods of the civil conflict. Despite the praises offered to Ecomog, some blamed their inefficiency for the eventual brutal invasion of Freetown in January of 1999; other reporters and civilians claimed that Ecomog committed atrocities similar to the RUF during the conflict. (Gberie 2005, 112)

Executive Outcomes (EO) was another militant group from South Africa that was hired in 1995 by General Valentine Strasser to help control rebel activity. EO included Angolans, Zimbabweans, and Namibians and was described by Harper's Magazine as "a collection of former spies, assassins, and crack bush guerrillas." (Rubin 1997) Finally, United Nations soldiers acting as part of UNAMSIL (United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone) supported the Sierra Leone government and managed the disarmament process along with a cohort of British troops. About 110 IMAT (International Mission and Training) British troops continue to train SLA members today. The role of UNAMSIL and the successes, failures, obstacles and its transformation from an observation mission to a peacemaking force will subsequently be discussed.

ii. Conflict timelines

Although the manifold factions, coups, peace accords, and international interventions make it difficult to effectively summarize the conflict, it is helpful to describe the war in several distinct periods: 1991-1996, 1996-1997, 1997-1998, January 1999, and February 1999-January 2002. The first period, from 1991-1996 saw the beginnings of the conflict, a military coup, and ended with democratic elections. During most of this period, the deaths and destruction caused by fighting in Sierra Leone were

largely ignored by the international community. The beginning of Sierra Leone's civil conflict is often cited as an announcement by Charles Taylor on the BBC on November 1, 1990 threatening to attack and destroy Sierra Leone's airport. Taylor was distraught that Sierra Leone had allowed Ecomog, whose mission was to control Taylor and his forces in Liberia, to be based in Sierra Leone, and declared that their presence positioned Sierra Leone as a legitimate target. (Williams 2001) After this announcement, the first appearances of RUF rebel forces- largely members of Taylor's own fighting factions- infiltrated Sierra Leone's Eastern border areas.

Shortly after the RUF invasion, led by corporal Foday Sankoh, the RUF launched an offensive on farmers, villagers, and miners. The objectives at this point were primarily to demonstrate the weakness of then President Joseph Momoh. Momoh struggled to recruit troops to help resist the RUF, resulting in a large number of young and untrained men joining the SLA. In April of 1992 several junior officers of the SLA carried out a coup forcing Momoh to flee to Guinea. The National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) was formed as the ruling power with Captain Valentine Strasser as chairman. Although the NPRC was initially successful in pushing the RUF out of the diamond rich areas and into Liberia, the RUF soldiers regrouped and returned with intensified attacks on civilians. The NPRC initiated another recruitment campaign that primarily attracted uneducated and untrained youths. Due to poor training and sporadic pay, this particular group of soldiers, or sobels, was frequently accused of looting and theft and collaboration with the RUF.

From 1991-1996 the RUF gained power over the diamond areas in the East, terrorized and murdered countless civilians, looted and destroyed houses, schools and

hospitals, and systemically used sexual violence to terrorize populations. By 1996 more than 15,000 people had been killed, 70% of the countries schools had been destroyed, only 80 health centers were still functioning (mostly in Freetown), 900,000 citizens had registered for food aid, and nearly half of the population were displaced. (Adebajo and Keen 2004; Gberie 2005) It was reported that by March 1996, 75% of school age children were out of school and the country's economy had shrunk to an annual growth rate of -6.24%. (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 204) At this time, Strasser relied heavily on Nigerian troops to protect Freetown and eventually hired Executive Outcomes (EO) to support the SLA. (Reno 1998, 220)

1996-1997 is the second distinct period beginning with a tenuous phase of stability and democratic elections. Through the help of EO and Nigerian troops, the RUF forces were contained and driven from Freetown in 1996. (Hirsh 2001A, 145-162) At this time, despite RUF terror tactics, there was significant pressure from civil society groups, particularly women's groups, for elections to be held to replace the military government. (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 249) Leading up to the elections the RUF used amputations to discourage citizens from voting. The mantra of the RUF at this time was "No hands to fingerprint, no fingerprints no vote." (Abraham 2004, 41-65) At the end of February 1996 presidential elections were held and after a March run-off ballot Ahmad Tejan Kabbah won the Presidency. (Reno 1998, 220) Shortly after taking office, Kabbah initiated peace talks with the RUF in the Ivory Coast; however, the hope offered by these talks and by the Kabbah presidency was short lived. In May of 1997, just 15 months after the elections, the RUF launched another coup. RUF troops streamed into Freetown and opened Pademba Road prison releasing over 600 prisoners

including Major Johnny Paul Koroma.(Gberie 2005, 95) The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) was announced as the ruling power with Koroma as its chairman and Foday Sankoh its Vice. (Abdullah 1998, 231)[35] The AFRC declared that they wanted to form an alliance with RUF members and encouraged rebels to join its movement.

The next period of the conflict, from May 1997- March 1998 was described as "bloody chaos," (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 208) and a "normative collapse of the long suffering Sierra Leone state." (Gberie 2005, 98) Journalists opposing the AFRC were threatened and tortured, the disarmament process that had been initiated was rejected by the new government, and widespread violence and terror escalated. Understandably, there was a massive national rejection of the AFRC with approximately 400,000 Sierra Leoneans deciding to flee during the first 3 months of the coup. (Gberie 2005, 102) Although the AFRC promised to retain power until 2001, Ecomog troops increased their number of forces and pressured the AFRC to negotiate a peace deal. After a military embargo and growing pressure, the AFRC agreed to reinstate Kabbah by April 1998. By February 1998 Ecomog troops had taken control of Freetown and attempted to secure the capital for Kabbah's return in March. Upon Kabbah's return, he announced his third cabinet at the end of March and continued to rely heavily on Ecomog troops to maintain security.

Despite diplomatic efforts by the reinstated President, the security situation in Sierra Leone continued to deteriorate until, out of fear and desperation, international agencies and the UN began withdrawing foreign staff in December 1998. On January

[35] In August 2007, Earnest Bai Koroma won the Presidential election in Sierra Leone. He is a member of the previous opposition party- the All People's Congress (APC).

6th, three days after the UNOMSIL mission evacuated its last members from the country, rebel groups initiated what was easily the most brutal attack of the entire conflict. On January 6th 1999 RUF forces descended on Freetown in what was called "Operation No Living Thing." (Hirsh 2001A, 150) The motivation for the attack was unclear but may have included the objective of releasing Foday Sankoh from Pademba Road prison. In a sick twist of fate, rebel forces raided a World Food Program warehouse outside of Freetown before the attack and found hundreds of new machetes that had been purchased for farming tools. Instead of being used for cultivation, these machetes became the primary weapons for hundreds of rebel forces resulting in multiple amputations and slayings. (Gberie 2005) During this attack on the capital, it is estimated that over 5000 civilians were killed, 3000 children were reported missing and one third of the total population was homeless. (Abraham 2004) The full scope of the horror of these days cannot be summarized here, however Gberie's account provides an effective glimpse into the events:

> civilians were gunned down within their houses, rounded up and massacred on the streets, thrown from the upper floors of buildings, used as human shields, and burnt alive in cars and houses. They had their limbs hacked off with machetes, eyes gouged out with knives, hands smashed with hammers, and bodies burned with boiling water. Women and girls were systematically sexually abused, and children and young people abducted by the hundreds. (2005)

If anything beneficial could be seen as resulting from this campaign of terror, it was that the international community finally turned their attention to Sierra Leone. The UN approved a peacekeeping contingent of 6000 under UNAMSIL that was authorized to use deadly force. (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 220)

On July 7th, 1999 the Lome Peace agreement was signed between the Sierra Leone government and the major fighting forces. (Reno 1998, 221) The accord had

serious problems; rebel forces were pardoned for the atrocities they had committed and, shockingly, Foday Sankoh was appointed director of the National Resources Commission- giving him control over the country's diamond industry. (Williams 2001, 149) The phase that followed this accord up until the end of the conflict in January 2002 was perhaps the most trying time in the history of UN peacekeeping. UNAMSIL's commitment following "Operation No Living Thing" was welcomed by the citizens of Sierra Leone; however, the peacekeepers were ill matched and ill prepared for rebel activity. UNAMSIL soldiers were only lightly armed and, initially, could not use force unless under direct threat. As a result, there were several reports of civilians being killed by rebel forces while UN soldiers could merely watch. (Bariagaber, 2006) The peacekeepers failed to convince both civilians and rebels of their authority in the country. UNAMSIL was referred to as "U-nasty" and peacekeepers were called "beach-keepers" because cohorts could often be found enjoying the country's beaches. (Gberie 2005, 167) The disarmament process had slowed down to a near halt due to a lack of coordination by peacekeepers and bullying by RUF soldiers. UNAMSIL troops also failed to prevent the virtual failure of the Lome Peace Accord that had been signed with RUF troops in July 1999.

The UN has been accused of rendering West Africa a "laboratory for the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping." (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 246) The UN mission in Sierra Leone had been watched by the international community with great interest and scrutiny not only because it was the largest UN peacekeeping mission in history- before the mission ended its troop numbers exceeded 20,000- but also because it was contrasted to concurrent missions of the United States in Somalia and the UN mission in Kosovo.

There is no denying that the UN mission in Sierra Leone went through a steep learning curve during its first few years in Sierra Leone. Perhaps the greatest challenge came in 2000 when RUF soldiers kidnapped 500 UNAMSIL peacekeepers. (HirshA 2001, 158) The kidnapping was a response to the refusal of the UN to accede to the RUF's demand for the return of ten fighters who had given up their weapons during the disarmament process. The kidnapping of UN troops was humiliating for the relatively new and ambitious mission in Sierra Leone. The international community began to question the role of the UN and its relevance and capabilities in conflict zones. This pressure led to a rethinking of UNAMSIL and the institution of changes to the mission- the most significant was the mandate to kill RUF soldiers as the situation required and to accelerate the disarmament process. (Gberie 2005) Despite its challenges, over time the mission has become largely viewed as a success and a model for future interventions. (Thusi 2004, 1)

iv. The Official "End" of Conflict

There was no single event or peace accord that ended conflict in Sierra Leone. There are claims (particularly by British soldiers) that British troops sent in after the embarrassment of the UN kidnapping ordeal effectively "cleaned up" UNAMSIL's mess and restored peace. There are other claims that general war fatigue, combined with the increasing effectiveness of UNAMSIL and British soldiers led to the surrender of RUF fighters: "the RUF probably thought that the UN peace process was more attractive than dealing with British troops and the Sierra Leone government forces." (Patel in Adebajo and Keen 2004, 267) With the ending of the adult disarmament process in January 2002, President Kabbah declared the war over. (Reliefweb 2002) By

this time 72,490 combatants had been disarmed and 42,000 weapons were collected." (Gberie 2005, 171) In July 1999, through the Lome Peace Accord, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission had been initiated to produce "an impartial body of historical record" of the war and to "help restore the human dignity of the victims and promote reconciliation." (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 215) Although it was criticized for its timing, its Eurocentric focus, the lack of dissemination, and its narrowness, the 50 000 page TRC report was released in October 2004.

The Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Process

The most common definitions of each of the three phases of the DDR are as follow: first, *disarmament* is "the collection of small arms and light and heavy weapons within a conflict zone; second, *demobilization* is the "process by which parties to a conflict begin to disband their military structures, and combatants begin the transformation into civilian life," and, finally, *reintegration* is "the process which allows ex-combatants and their families to adapt economically and socially to productive civilian life." (McConnan and Uppard 2002)

In the middle of 1998, in the midst of continued violence and insecurity, the Government of Sierra Leone announced it had designed d a plan for national disarmament. The Sierra Leone Government and the World Bank established a Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) to solicit funding from the international donor community for the DDR process with the World Bank, UNICEF, UNAMSIL and the Sierra Leone Government providing a significant portion of the funding. A National Commission on Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR) was created to oversee the three phase process of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR). The

ultimate goal declared by the NCDDR was "to support the national strategy for peace that include[d] the consolidation of the political process and security, which form the basis for a viable post-war national recovery programme." (NCDDR 2002, 4) The initial mandate was to target 45,000 soldiers from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), and the Sierra Leone Army (SLA); however, by the time the program finished its mandate in 2002, some 75,000 combatants were disarmed at over 16 demobilisation centers around the country.

i. Disarmament

The Government of Sierra Leone defined disarmament as the "voluntary laying down of all weapons and ammunition by all warring parties for lasting peace in Sierra Leone." (NCDDR) After the establishment of UNOMSIL in July 1998, one of the primary mandates was the monitoring of the disarmament and demobilisation of ex-combatants. Especially after periods of humiliation for the UN missions in Sierra Leone at the expense of armed groups, the disarmament of combatants in Sierra Leone became tied to the perceived success of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and later the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 255-256) Essentially, the disarmament phase involved the handing over of weapons by ex-combatants to UN officials.

Due to escalations in violence and the signing of the Lome and Abuja peace accords, the DDR process happened in 4 phases, including: Phase I from September 1998-October 1998, Phase II from October 1999-May 2000, the "interim phase" from May 2000 to May 2001, and Phase III from May 2001 to January 2002. (NCDDR 2002) The escalation of violence resulting in the brutal massacre in Freetown in January 1999

halted the first phase of the disarmament. Once the Lome Peace Agreement (LPA) was signed in July 1999, plans for the second phase of disarmament began; however phase II was halted only months after it was initiated due to increased violence and insecurity. The Interim Phase coincided with chaos, violence, and desperate negotiations between UNAMSIL and the fighting factions. It was during this time that the credibility of the UN was seriously tested with the kidnapping of 500 UN staff. At this time a comprehensive review of the DDR process was conducted in hopes of building on the difficult lessons learned from the previous phases. Finally, after a cease-fire was signed in Abuja, Nigeria in November 2000, Phase III of the DDR was initiated in May 2001. After just 9 months, on January 2002 President Kabbah declared the war officially over and the disarmament process complete. (NCDDR 2002)

ii. Demobilisation

Demobilisation has been defined loosely as the "process by which parties to a conflict begin to disband their military structures, and combatants begin the transformation into civilian life." (McConnan and Uppard) The demobilisation process was described as a period of adjustment for ex-combatants, or "the process of preparing the ex-combatants to enter civilian life with adequate support." (NCDDR) Demobilisation centers were established throughout the country and ex-combatants were housed there for periods ranging from a 2-3 days to 90 days. (NCDDR 2002) This range was largely a result of inconsistent funding and the impact of renewed hostilities. (Adebajo and Keen 2004) At demobilization centers, ex-combatants were given food, water, and shelter while information was collected about their involvement in the conflict and they were processed through a national identification process. Ex-

combatants were given photo ID cards that were required for reintegration activities; in effect, ex-combatants had to participate in the entire demobilization process in order to be eligible for training and education opportunities. The demobilization process was declared over in February 2002, one month after the disarmament phase ended.

iii. Reintegration

According to the NCDDR, the reintegration phase of the DDR was designed to support "the social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants by engaging them in productive activities beneficial to them and facilitating their return to their families and communities." (NCDDR 2002) The goal of reintegration programs was to facilitate the ex-combatants' social and economic reintegration into communities in order that they might "participate fully in all traditional and social events in the communities without inhibitions." (NCDDR 2002) The NCDDR recognized that due to the 11 year conflict, some ex-combatants had lost ties to their families and communities and would "support their resettlement into *normal* society." (NCDDR 2002) There were a variety of "sensitization" campaigns to encourage communities and families to accept former combatants into their homes and environs; however, the bulk of reintegration activities focused on training and education for ex-combatants. Depending on their age and education level, ex-combatants were given the choice of formal education, vocational and skills training, an apprentice opportunity, or a public works/job placement option.

Vocational skills were offered in the following areas: carpentry, metal works, auto mechanics, tailoring, gara tie dye, soap making, hair dressing, plumbing and masonry, electrical works, computer skills, building material production and basic

construction and technology. Training in all areas lasted between 3-9 months, depending on the trade.

The apprentice program offered similar trades and was designed for those with limited education. Other initiatives included special programs for child ex-combatants, disabled ex-combatants, and "family stabilization measures" including micro-credit programs for the wives of ex-combatants and female ex-combatants. (NCDDR)

According to NCDDR statistics, 39% of ex-combatants chose formal education, 23% chose skills training, 10% chose an apprenticeship, and approximately 4% chose public works and job placement. (NCDDR 2002) In addition, about 2,385 ex-RUF and CDF soldiers were recruited into the Sierra Leone army. (NCDDR 2002) Although the NCDDR did not investigate the numbers of males and females enrolled in the assorted trades, interviews with staff and facilitators of training programmes in Sierra Leone indicate that women and girls enrolled almost exclusively in either gara tie dying, soap making, tailoring, catering, hairdressing or weaving. In addition, the few programs targeting female soldiers consistently offered these same select trades.[36]

Looking Back

At the end of the DDR process, the government of Sierra Leone declared "all the armed units of both the RUF and the CDF were disarmed." (NCDDR 2002) The improvement of security in the country was deemed the greatest achievement of the disarmament process. (NCDDR 2002) The international community largely saw the process as a success and even recommended using the Sierra Leone DDR as a model for future post-conflict situations. (World Bank 2002) Despite its praises, each phase of the

[36] For example, UNICEF's program 'The Girls Left Behind' offered gara tie dying, catering, tailoring and weaving. Children Associated with the War (CAW) and the Augustan Bintue organizations offered tailoring for female soldiers.

DDR had significant flaws. Funding was perhaps the most consistent obstacle to the successful implementation of the DDR. There are a variety of reasons as to why the DDR in Sierra Leone was so consistently destitute. The gross underestimation of the number of ex-combatants that would arrive for disarmament caused budgeting difficulties. Also, perhaps because Kosovo and East Timor were receiving more attention and more funding, only half of the needed $50 million had been donated to the Sierra Leone DDR by the end of 1999. (Adebajo and Keen 2004; International Crisis Group 2001) Funding shortfalls led to difficulties such as insufficient camp provisions at demobilisation centers, delayed payments to ex-combatants, and the slow establishment of demobilization centers. (Christian Aid 1999)

Particular concerns with the disarmament stage of the DDR included inadequate information about the armed groups in Sierra Leone and the challenge of ongoing violence and insecurity. Francis Kai Kai, Executive Secretariat of the NCDDR admitted "right from the planning phase, it was difficult to get reliable military info on troop strength, location and quantity of weapons in possession of respective fighting forces." (NCDDR 2002) Without this information, the NCDDR had difficulty estimating the total number of forces in particular areas, the number of children, or the number of female soldiers. This imprecision complicated the planning and implementation of the entire DDR process. Security was a particular concern during the disarmament period. Throughout the first phase of the DDR, over 50% of the country was inaccessible due to violence and the RUF control of territory. (NCDDR 2002) During some periods, the RUF even managed to prohibit UNAMSIL from operating in Eastern areas. There were

also reports that Foday Sankoh and other RUF commanders were preventing their troops from participating in the disarmament. (Adebajo and Keen 2004, 258)

There were also distinct obstacles to the demobilisation phase of the DDR. The organization of the demobilisation phase led to misunderstandings and tension between combatants and facilitators. A significant number of combatants that had been disarmed never completed the demobilisation process. Some combatants were intimidated by the photo identification process and believed the data would be used to prosecute them later. Women were particularly apt to leave demobilisation centers due to a lack of security or stigma. Not all demobilisation centers had separate areas for women and girls and sexual violence was reported as a concern at numerous locations.

Criticisms of the reintegration phase of the DDR primarily focus on funding shortcomings and the limitations of training programs. The goal of providing all combatants with skills to support themselves financially was complicated by the lack of funding for programs and the extreme destruction of the national economy. Due to a lack of funding, some of the training programs were only three weeks long. Reintegration programs graduated combatants who were not only poorly trained, but also trained in skills that were often useless in their home region or community. The NCDDR admitted the need for an assessment of "the relevance of the various skills area in the context of the needs of the economy." (NCDDR 2002) However, a labour market analysis was never consulted during the implementation of the reintegration programs. Women were greatly impacted by the limited training options. Although reports indicate that combatants were free to choose any of the trades offered, there is strong indication that women and girls were expected to choose one of the highly gendered options: gara

tie dying, catering, tailoring, weaving, and soap making. Sullay Sesay recounted that he could only recall one woman enrolled in the male dominated trades. (Sesay 2005)

War and Sexual Violence

Throughout the conflict, rape, sexual violence, and sexual slavery were primary tactics of warfare. The Truth and Reconciliation Report recorded the testimonies of over 800 women and girls who had been raped. These women and girls represent a small portion of the total estimated number of victims of sexual violence. According to Physicians for Human Rights, over 200,000 women and girls may have been victims of rape during the conflict in Sierra Leone. Although rape was used throughout the 11 year conflict, there were higher incidents reported during the 1999 rebel incursion into Freetown. Between March 1999 and March 2000, 2,350 rape survivors were registered in Freetown alone during FAWE's Rape Victims Programme. (Buegwa 2001, 84) Of these survivors, 2,085 were between the ages of 0 and 26 years and 165 were over the age of 27. (Forster 2001, 148) It was reported that 'many' other victims of sexual violence did not come forward for treatment. (Forster 2001, 148)

It is important to note that rape was not used randomly as a weapon of war; rather rape was used systematically, strategically and consistently throughout the conflict. There are numerous accounts of women and girls being abducted and kept as "bush wives" and "sex slaves" (these terms have been used interchangeably by various reports and organizations). Sexual violence was used strategically to violate cultural and religious norms. Sometimes rape was inflicted in front of children, parents, husbands. (Pemagbi 2001, 35) Fathers were forced to watch the raping of their daughters, older women were raped by young boys, and women were raped in public places including

mosques and churches. (Kamara 2001) When Physicians for Human Rights conducted a specific study among 991 internally displaced women and their family members they found that 94% of respondents had experienced some exposure to war-related violence and 13% had experienced war-related sexual assault. (Physicians for Human Rights 2002) Hebbeh Forster explains the legacies of sexual violence in Sierra Leone:

> In some rural areas the concept of rape has taken on new meaning. Women have been forced to accept that sexual favours have been given to those who protect them, be they rebels, soldiers or Civil Defence Forces (CDF). They have lost all rights to the privacy of their bodies and the right to say no to unwanted and possibly unsafe sex. They consider rape as what happens in the bush. This may be one of the greatest evils of our war. (Forster 2001, 149)

Women and War

One of the downsides to the publicity surrounding sexual violence and the Sierra Leone conflict is that it helped to create a general picture of women and girls as victims of the conflict. Many accounts of the war describe women either as victims of sexual violence or sex slaves, victims of the economic impacts of war, (Keen 2005, 243-244) or captives of their rebel commanders. (McEvoy-Levy 2006) The Lome Peace Accord only mentions female victims and does not even make reference to female soldiers. Although women and girls were certainly victimized in unimaginable ways, their experience of, and participation in, the war was not merely as victims. Little is written about women and girls as agents within the civil conflict; however, there is evidence that women- particularly female soldiers- were both perpetrators and empowered through their roles in the conflict.

Some of the various activities that women and girls were reported to have participated in during the war include killing, using weapons, commanding armed

groups, spying, looting, raping, and burning houses.[37] In some cases women were reported to have dressed in rich clothing and lived for months in villages the RUF was planning to attack. (McEvoy-Levy 2006) There are other stories of powerful female commanders such as Adama Cut-Hand, who was said to be among the most brutal RUF members. Another woman reported that she was elected the "mommy queen," or the leader of the other female soldiers and abductees. She reported that at one point 130 children were under her authority. (McEvoy-Levy 2006, 35) Other famous female warriors include Marie Keita and Willimina Bintu Fofana who were said to have mystical powers against bullets. (Gberie 2005, 83) Edward from CEDAW reported "some of the most vicious soldiers and commanders were women." (Anague 2005)

Despite this evidence, there are still huge gaps in terms of what we know about female soldiers in Sierra Leone. Specifically, there are conflicting statistics on the number of female soldiers and varying reports of the roles that women played as soldiers. Rev. Hassan Mansaray, who worked at disarmament camps and eventually created a program for former female soldiers admitted: "I don't know what happened to the ex-combatant girls and ladies. Amongst the group that was brought to us the girls were not even 10....I'm still wondering what happened to the ex-combatant ladies and girls because the number that showed up were too small which means that we have lots and lots of these women and girls that are not reintegrated. (Mansaray 2005)

It is nearly impossible to be absolutely certain of the exact number of female soldiers who participated in the Sierra Leone conflict. Most estimates are based on disarmament data, or numbers provided by NGOs or individual researchers. The

[37] For more details on the various roles reported by women see chapter three of this dissertation.

problem with disarmament data is that, by comparing exit data from the program to the reported numbers of female soldiers during the conflict, we now know that the majority of female soldiers did not participate in the program. The numbers are further complicated by estimates of the number of women in particular armed groups such as the RUF, the Civil Defense Forces, the AFRC, child soldier ranks, and the Sierra Leone Army. Estimates of females within particular fighting factions are not always helpful because they have been confused with the total number of female soldiers.

Most of the estimates of women's involvement in the war are derived from the number of women in the RUF. Of the total number of RUF soldiers demobilised (24, 352), Conciliation Resources has estimated that the number of women soldiers may have been 10,000. (Christian Aid 1999) This same source estimates that up to 9,500 of these women may have been abducted or donated by relatives. Myrian Denov has reported that up to 30% of RUF *child soldiers* were girls. (Denov, 2006) Other sources place the number of female soldiers at only 7% and claim that almost all of the cases of women who disarmed are "false cases" because they did not really train and act as soldiers. (Agencia Espanola de Cooperacion Internacional.) Mazurana, in contrast found that 1/3 of the women who were with the RUF rebel groups had been involved in active combat and almost half had weapons training. (Nicole Itano 2004) My data indicates that anywhere from 30-50% of the various factions of fighting forces during the conflict in Sierra Leone were females.

As will be discussed in Chapter Three, there seemed to be a great deal of emphasis on differentiating female soldiers from female abductees, camp followers, sex slaves, and domestic workers. It was often assumed that women and girls fell in one of

the later categories and were seldom categorized solely as soldiers. Despite this, there is growing evidence that women and girls took part in all aspects of conflict- including combat. Further, as Wessels and Jonah have noted, the common denominators for all members of fighting forces in the Sierra Leone conflict were that "daily activities and roles were thoroughly militarized, and experiences of death, either through witnessing or perpetration, were widespread." (McEvoy-Levy 2006, 34)

Due to the lack of information and reliable statistics about the number of female soldiers, reintegration programs-including training programs, counselling, health care, and family tracing- for these women and girls were insufficient or non-existent. Andy Brooks argues that post-conflict reintegration programs tend to be based on the assumption of male adolescent beneficiaries. (Brooks in Shelper 2002) The few programs directed at females after the conflict tended to target female victims, abductees, or sexual violence victims rather than female soldiers. UNICEF's "The Girls Left Behind" program defined its beneficiaries as women and girl *abductees* who were associated with the fighting forces but did not benefit from the disarmament process. Further, in the UN report "From Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding: UN Strategy to Support National Recovery and Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone," under 'Child Protection' issues, it is recommended that the UN "Assist and support girls/young women who were *forcibly abducted* and are being prevented from returning home." (2002 emphasis added)

The impact of major programs such as this was that only women and girls who fit the list of 'acceptable' roles during the conflict were eligible for benefits post-conflict. There were no specific programs for violent women or women leaders, for

example. The lack of programs targeting women and girls soldiers who voluntarily joined served to define 'female soldier' as someone who was a victim, captured by men, and forced to serve with an armed group. A further impact is that statistics gathered from such programs may be skewed as a result of women and girls adjusting their wartime stories and experiences in order to qualify for the desperately needed benefits of reintegration programs.

Female soldiers had a much different reintegration experience from men. While men and boys could take pride in their roles during the conflict and had access to numerous lucrative training options, women and girls were often ashamed to report their status as soldiers and were offered very few training options. Elise Barth found that female soldiers were seen to have violated "deeply anchored preconceptions of gender identity" in contrast to male soldiers who strengthened their gender roles through military activity. (Barth, Aid Worker's Network) Barth concludes that the perception of female soldiers as an aberration of society obliges women and girls to return to "more traditional ways of living" in order to fit into their families and communities. This resumption of traditional roles was encouraged and instituted by post-conflict programs for former soldiers. While males were offered training in highly desirable and lucrative skills such as masonry, carpentry, auto mechanics, taxi driving, and tailoring, women and girls, as previously noted, were offered training in gara tie dying, catering, weaving, tailoring, and soap making. These trades tended to be more popular in rural regions and were far less lucrative. In fact, because so many females

were trained in these few trades, some communities had an overabundance of gara tie dyers or soap makers, rendering the trade nearly useless.[38]

These highly gendered trades for female soldiers were chosen by the NCDDR, which was advised by the World Bank, the UN, UNICEF and other international organizations. A market assessment was never done to determine if these trades would be useful for women and girls. When program coordinators were asked about the relevance of the trades for women, most simply replied that their organizations only received funding to offer those specific trades. (Bintue, Sesay, Jalloh 2005) Therefore, if a community organization had decided to offer basic schooling or skills training in another area, they would not have received funding. Further, the negative stigma attached to female soldiers meant that women and girls were reluctant to participate in the few programs that were available to them. The main source of stigma for female soldiers came from the assumption that most women and girl soldiers had been raped. For many communities, a woman or girl who has been raped is considered 'impure' or unlucky. Wendy Melville from Women Working Development explained how Sia's story was characteristic of many girls she encountered post-conflict:

> We had lots of experience with girls coming back to the community alone... Some of the girls were ashamed to go and report themselves as soldiers. The girls were more ashamed because they were raped…They tended to 'mold' back into the community so you wouldn't necessarily know who they were. They didn't want to talk about it. They just went back to the community to find a way to make a living- and there was usually only one way to do that…commercial sex. (Melville 2005)

Isha Kamara, a social worker who has worked with former female soldiers for years confirmed that a large number of female soldiers are "roaming about the streets"

[38] See also Shelpter (2002).

because of lack of opportunities and that many of these women and girls turn to prostitution for survival. (Kamara 2005)

Moving Forward

It would be fruitless to attempt to understand the conflicts that exist in the "post-conflict" era in Sierra Leone without a basic comprehension of the country's history. In particular, the way in which sex, marriage and childbirth have been regulated throughout Sierra Leone's colonial and post-colonial period shed light on current social relations, stereotypes, and hierarchies. Further, one of the general claims I aim to make in this dissertation is that generalized models of development, including "cookie-cutter" DDR programs are not effective precisely because they cannot account for the particular context of a country. In turn, providing this background information demonstrates to readers my commitment to demonstrating the significance of the historical, economic, social and political context of a case study.

The following chapters will move from this general introduction to Sierra Leone to a more specific analysis of particular issues related to "post"-conflict development. Chapter Three will focus on the extent to which female soldiers were recognized and included in the disarmament process. Chapter Four centers on sexual violence and the multiple impacts wartime rape has had on the population of Sierra Leone. Finally, Chapter Five looks specifically at empowerment policies and programs for women in the country. Each of these substantive chapters re-emphasizes the historical influences, including colonial British law, ethnic ties, and secret societies on current political and social relations.

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Chapter Three
Madonnas, Yoobas,[39] Warriors, or Ideal Victims?: The Dismissal of Female Soldiers in Sierra Leone

There are two stories within the stacks of documents and interviews collected during my field research in Sierra Leone that particularly shaped and inspired this chapter. The first came from Fatima Sessay.[40] Fatima sat down in front of me for an interview early in December 2005. The interview began in an almost routine way- she was, after all, the 35th woman I had interviewed in a short period of time. When I asked the question: "Did you consider yourself a soldier during the conflict?." I was not surprised when she said yes. However, when she went on to reveal to me that she possessed a gun during the conflict and had killed as part of her duties I was alarmed. She was not the first woman to tell me she had participated in violence but she was certainly the youngest. The war had ended over four years earlier, which meant that Fatima would have fought in the war at the age of 14. Her justification for not going through the disarmament process mirrored several other women's accounts- she did not believe the process would benefit her and she chose not to participate.

The second story came from a group of local Priests over a casual dinner conversation. I was inquiring about female soldiers when one man asked if I had heard of "Adama Cut-hand." He went on to disclose that she rose to the ranks of commander within the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group and was identified as one of the leaders of amputation initiatives- thus her nickname. She was so highly regarded as

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[39] Yoobas (also spet Toogas or Yubas is the Krio word for buzzards; it is also used to imply "whore" (Spitzer in Phillips 2006, 201)

[40] Personal interview. Freetown, Sierra Leone. December 15, 2005. The names of all female soldiers have been changed to preserve their anonymity. In addition, any detailed information that might reveal their identity has been omitted.

a skilled fighter that the current Sierra Leone Army (SLA) allowed her to integrate within its ranks where she is still a member.

Stories like these significantly disrupted my preconceived notions about female soldiers in Sierra Leone. Most available information about female soldiers indicated that the majority were abductees and that their primary duties were sex slaves, porters, domestic workers, and messengers. (Gberie 2005, Hirsh 2001, Keen 2005) Reports from the "lessons learnt" for the disarmament in Sierra Leone stated that women and girls had largely been left behind and overlooked during the process. (UNICEF 2005) Both of these chronicles conveyed a similar message: females- even female soldiers- were mainly victims of the civil conflict.

The more data I collected on active female combatants who joined voluntarily, participated in various activities- including killing, and chose to avoid the disarmament process, the more perplexing reports and headlines that presented women as victims seemed. The following questions began to drive my research: What accounts for this gap between the representations of the experiences and roles of females during the conflict in Sierra Leone and the narratives I collected from former female soldiers?; and, How has this gap impacted, and been perpetuated by, post-conflict programs designed to reintegrate both male and female soldiers back into their community? The central questions of this chapter contribute to the overall aims of this dissertation, which include disrupting dominant representations of women and girls in post-conflict Sierra Leone and showing the disciplinary nature of development policies.

Outline of Chapter and Approach

I begin by examining the disarmament process in Sierra Leone as a process defined by policymakers as central to both security and development. Here, Mark Duffield's work on the radicalization of development, or the growing conflation of security and development, and the Copenhagen School's understanding of security discussed in Chapter One is used to support the argument that the disarmament process in Sierra Leone was securitized. Jacqueline Stevens' work on the construction of gender by the state enables me to take Duffield's analyses further through an analysis of what "liberal development policies" might mean for women and girls. The pairing of Duffield and Stevens' work can be used to answer the following questions: What does the notion of liberal peace assume about women's roles in this secure world?; and, How do notions of family become enmeshed in discourses of development?

Next, I look at the extent to which females acted as soldiers during Sierra Leone's civil conflict in contrast to the low numbers that participated in the disarmament process. Here I review selected literature on women and war in order to uncover mainstream representations of women and girls' roles during conflict. Criminology literature is also utilized to illustrate how women and girls easily become categorized as "ideal" victims. In this section, Lene Hansen's view of identity formation and Jacqueline Stevens' work on the phenomenology of the artificial as natural are also employed to critique the construction of women and girls post-conflict as helpless victims and benevolent and natural pillars of the nuclear family. Hansen bases her discernment of identity formation on Ole Waever's assertion that "identities will always be constructed through processes of differentiation and linking." (2006, 24) In this

section I explore the process of linking and differentiation between securitized male soldiers and naturalized female victims in Sierra Leone. I compare how the construction of the identity of *perpetrators* within the criminology literature and *soldiers* within literature on war requires the construction of an oppositional victim. In both cases, women and girls are often constructed as the "ideal victim."

Third, I consider the multiple impacts of excluding women and girls from the category of soldier in Sierra Leone. I argue that securitized subjects, such as soldiers, receive significantly more attention and funding from post-conflict policy makers. In this section, the speech act, or the construction of security priorities, is examined as dependent on the construction of "normal" politics and the "non-politicized" private realm. Put another way, issues traditionally viewed as "high politics" (read: armed men and states) can only be defined in relation to "low politics" (read: sex, domestic work, childbirth, and the family). Here I refer back to Hansen's assertion that the production of identities simultaneously creates exclusions.[41] The construction of male soldiers as securitized and the primary beneficiary for most disarmament programs is contrasted to de-securitized or "naturalized" female subjects who were relegated not only out of so-called security priorities but also out of the realm of "normal" politics.

Finally, I bring in Jaques Donzelot's work on philanthropy and the regulation of society to reiterate the central role of the family in development planning. Throughout the chapter I note ways in which female soldiers are categorized as atypical. This has mainly been as a result of myths about women generated from the nuclear family model. Contentions that women are "naturally" peaceful due to their life-giving roles

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[41] See chapter one for further explanation.

are appealed to in justifying the lack of attention to female soldiers. I explore the image of the family not as a prism that reflects universal behaviour but as a source of regulation and discipline.

The main question guiding the methodology of this chapter is: What does the successful securitization of male soldiers in contrast to the de-securitization of female soldiers reveal about the social limits placed on the notion of soldier, perpetrator, and victim? In this chapter, the framing of security priorities in post-conflict Sierra Leone- particularly in relation to the disarmament process- is analysed through a critical discourse analysis of news reports, NGO and INGO, government and aid agency documents and policies, as well as existing literature on the disarmament process in Sierra Leone. For Hansen, "a critical discourse might start by challenging the key representations of identity that underpin the policy in question." (2006, 31) Interviews with over 50 former female soldiers in Sierra Leone are presented as a challenge to key representations of female soldiers in Sierra Leone.

Background[42]

After the signing of the Lome Peace Accord in Sierra Leone international organizations and development institutions began implementing a variety of peace, development, and reconstruction programs. In particular, the disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) process was initiated to help former soldiers transition from "soldiers to citizens." The reintegration phase of the program for adults and children officially ended in 2002 and 2005 respectively; however there is evidence that frontline workers and members of communities in Sierra Leone still feel that

[42] For a more detailed account of the conflict and the disarmament process, please see Chapter Two.

reintegration and rehabilitation are not complete. (Shiaka, Sesay, Abu, Momoh 2005) Following Sierra Leone's conflict, nearly 75, 000 soldiers were received at the 70 centres for disarmament. (Anderlini and Mazurana 2004)

Numerous sources have described the disarmament process as a key element for achieving security and sustainable peace. (WomenWarPeace; Institute for Security Studies 2006) Specifically, the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program in Sierra Leone was touted as a fundamental element of the country's transition out of civil conflict. The DDR is a prime example of Duffield's account of the radicalization of development, or the coalescence of development and security policies. (Duffield 2001) The three phases of the DDR were designed with the understanding that peace will not result merely from the removal of guns from the hands of combatants; rather, a regimented process of rehabilitation and societal reconstruction is a prerequisite for a secure nation. (NCDDR 2000)

Engendering the DDR: Why women were overlooked

The DDR process in Sierra Leone was advertised as a success and has been recommended as a model for future programs. (World Bank 2002) Despite its praises, one of the "lessons learned" from the DDR has been drawn from its treatment of women and girls. The exact number of women and girls involved in the fighting forces is unknown; however, estimates of the number of women and girl soldiers range from 10% up to 50%. (Sesay 2005; Anderlini and Mazurana 2004). These numbers are not reflected in DDR statistics. Of the approximately 75,000 adult combatants disarmed, just under 5000 were females. (Mazurana and Carlson 2004) The number of girls that went through the children's DDR was abysmal; of the 6,845 child soldiers disarmed,

92% were boys and only 8% were girls. (UNICEF 2005) UNICEF has admitted, "DDR programmes have consistently failed to attract female combatants…Sierra Leone was no exception." (UNICEF 2005)

The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children described Sierra Leone's DDR process as "largely gender-blind" and argued that it did "not take into sufficient consideration the varied roles women and girls played among fighting forces and thus… not adequately provid[ing] for their specific DDR-related concerns and rights." (Lowicki 2003) Along with a growing body of research that critically examines gender and the DDR process in Sierra Leone, one of the most common explanations for the low numbers of females in the DDR is the argument that women and girls were not "real" soldiers; rather, they were primarily abductees, camp followers, domestic workers and sex slaves. (Mazurana and Carlson 2004)

In some cases, the attention given to the widespread use of sexual violence by all warring parties during the civil war in Sierra Leone has eclipsed investigations into female soldiers and female perpetrators. Reports such as Amnesty International's recent "Sierra Leone: Getting reparations right for survivors of sexual violence," (2000) and Human Rights Watch's "We Will Kill You If You Cry: Sexual violence in the Sierra Leone conflict" (2003) are extremely valuable in providing rare insights into the extent of sexual violence in Sierra Leone; however, these publications can be used to justify narrow perceptions of women and girls primarily as victims of the conflict.

The international humanitarian response to Sierra Leone's conflict has also tended to concentrate on female victims. (Human Rights Watch 2003; Amnesty International 2001; UNICEF 2005) There are numerous examples of internationally

supported programs directed at female victims of conflict; however there are few programs (in fact almost none) that are directed at former female combatants. Specific examples of such programs include the European Commission funded "Female Victims of Inhuman and Degrading Treatment Support Programme in Sierra Leone," which was "based on the idea that social and psychosocial rehabilitation process of survivors of war-related abuses is an essential step towards peace, development and human rights." (Europa) The Fund for Global Human Rights also funded an organization whose activities included "promoting women's rights and economic, social and cultural rights in northern, southern and eastern Sierra Leone by helping female victims of violence access the justice system and training communities to monitor and inform the allocation of government resources for essential services." (2006)

Unfortunately there are also numerous media accounts of the conflict that depict women and girls solely as victims. In a "gender profile" conducted by AFROL news it was reported:

> Women and children are however known to be the principal war victims, often submitted to rape, sexual slavery, forced labour, torture, mutilation and forced recruition by the RUF, known to use terror against the civil population as one of their principal war tactics. (afrol.com)

Another report identified women as the "worst losers" of Sierra Leone's War. (We the Women 2005) This article claimed: "Women [are] the symbol of love, kindness, mercy and spend there life coping with sexual and mental abuses done by one or more men in countries dealing with war like situation [sic]."

Chris Coulter and Rachel Brett are among those who have argued that disarmament organizers were unable to see past the participation of females in roles such as sex slaves, "wives," and domestic workers, to recognize their participation as combatants,

killers, looters and performers of amputations.(Coulter 2006) Susan McKay and Dyan Mazurana argue that having "DDR processes planned and implemented by military officials has resulted in a bias against those the military does not consider 'real soldiers' (i.e. men with guns)" (McKay and Mazurana 2004, 114) Mazurana and Khristopher Carlson have also determined that in Sierra Leone there was an "over-classification of girls and young women abducted by the RUF, AFRC, and SLA as "camp followers," "sex-slaves," and "wives" by some within the international community and the Sierra Leone government." (Mazurana and Carlson 2004, 21) They argue that this over-classification led to a disarmament process that did not address the "actual lived experiences" of girls and women. (Mazurana and Carlson 2004, 21)

Original, unpublished correspondence I discovered at the offices of the organization Children Associated with the War (CAW) demonstrates the reluctance of the Sierra Leone government to acknowledge female combatants. The initial letter was written by the CAW's director to the National Commission on Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR) asking if some child soldiers could be retroactively included in the disarmament program. Here is an excerpt:

> ...We would be grateful if you could please facilitate the retroactive demobilization of child ex-combatants in the Peacock farm and Waterloo communities in the western area following an assessment carried out by the above program through its outreach program of activities. Discussions emanating from our assessment reveal that all of these children had left their guns and ammunition with their commanders in their various operational areas, but are resolved to settle down with their families and parents to rebuild their lives. It is therefore worth knowing that child combatants, particularly girls, are unwilling and most times reluctant to register with NCDDR due to social factors as they sneak into communities of origin without having gone through the DDR process. In this connection we forward a clear list of child ex-combatants that have been sensitized and have expressed their willingness to be formally registered with the DDR unit. (Momoh 2005)

It is important to note that CAW's records indicated that almost half the girls they interviewed had participated in a variety of combat roles during the conflict. A selected review of the duties reported included: killing and looting, being "introduced into the use of weapons and guns," possessing an AK-47, amputation, and using a knife and a pistol.[43] (CAW 2005) The reply to CAW's letter demonstrates that, despite the evidence indicating that girls were active combatants, the NCDDR was unwilling to recognize them as such:

> Dear Sir,
> Regarding the retroactive demobilization of child ex combatants.
> I refer to your letter dated 1 March 2001, requesting for retroactive demobilization of child ex combatants of the Peacock farm and Waterloo rural communities. I wish to inform you that DDR cannot retroactively demobilize these children as they have proved to be camp followers and abductees and not combatants. We regret any inconvenience this decision may cause.
>
> Yours Faithfully,
> Dr. M.S. Tejan-kella
> Disarmament and Demobilization Manager[44]

The second justification for the low numbers of women in the DDR was that women and girls were simply overlooked. (UNICEF 2005) In particular, women and girls who did not go through the DDR process have been portrayed as victims "left behind" and "neglected" by the local and international community. For example UNICEF's report on the lessons learned from the DDR cites the consideration of gender and the *inclusion* of girls as a major shortcoming of their programming.

This explanation for the absence of women and girls from the DDR tends to describe women and girls as overlooked, left out, or "left behind" an otherwise efficacious process. In fact, one of the major programs initiated in response to criticisms

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[43] The identity of these children is withheld to protect them.
[44] This is a letter from the National Committee for Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR). Executive Secretariat, 1 May, 2001 to the program manager of CAW.

about the inclusion of girls and women in the DDR process was called "The Girls Left Behind." (UNICEF 2005) According to UNICEF, this program was created to target "young girls and women who were either still living with their captors or who had been abducted (before the age of 18) and had been released or escaped." (UNICEF, 2005) The program was designed to be a short-term intensive intervention "for abducted girls and young women to ensure their protection and reintegration and to offer them basic education and skills training." (UNICEF 2005, 17)

Both of these explanations for the lack of participation of women and girls in the DDR deny the agency of females during the war. There is an assumption that women and girls were either victims caught up in the fray of a male dominated conflict or that they were left behind by programs that likely would have benefited them in the same way they benefited male soldiers.[45] These explanations ignore how socially constructed ideas about the roles and place of women and men during war impact policies, depictions, and our ability to accept and acknowledge violent female soldiers with agency. My interviews with female soldiers and an investigation of the discourses used to construct males as securitized subjects in contrast to de-securitized female victims disrupt these stereotypes of women and girls as exclusively passive victims of the conflict.

> Mary was one of the few women interviewed who went through the DDR process. She participated in the war as a soldier for 2 years. Her activities included fighting and killing. When she went to the demobilization center she was held for 2 months and given a small

[45] It is important to note that there are disputed accounts of the extent to which the DDR benefited males. Authors like Malan McIntyre (2002) offer a positive assessment of the program while Adebajo and Keen (2007) argue that the program was flawed and benefited neither males nor females. From first hand experience, when I visited Sierra Leone I saw more evidence of male DDR skills training program graduates working successfully in the community. Many taxi drivers in Freetown and Makeni, for example, were former combatants.

amount of money; however, after the program she could not find her mother and discovered that her father had died during the conflict. Mary concluded that the counselling she was given "not to do bad" was useful but argued that she needed help with the children she gave birth to from the rebels. She noted that men had the advantage of being able to leave behind their children while women were left to care for them. Mary's most provocative report was that there were at least 100 women fighting alongside her in her group- "all had guns."

Women, Violence and War

One only has to peruse the literature on conflict to find evidence of the gendered assumption that men make war, women make peace.(Turpin 1998, 3) War, in general, has been described as "a masculine endeavour for which women may serve as victim, spectator, or prize." (Francine D'Amico 1998, 119) Aid agencies and military and peacekeeping operations have historically based their operations on the assumption that women and children are the most vulnerable victims of conflict. (Carpenter 2007) Speaking of girls in particular, Carolyn Nordstrom has pointed out the assumption that children "are acted upon; they are listed as casualties- they do not act. They are not presented as having identities, politics, morals, and agendas for war or peace." (Nordstrom 1998, 81) Stereotypes of female victims are also present in accounts of the conflict in Sierra Leone. Women and girls in Sierra Leone have been described as being "left without help after surviving the horrifying experience of war," (Sengupta 2005) "invisible," and the "horrifying and hidden face(s) of war." (Sengupta 2005)

Hansen's account of identity formation sheds light on the process of linking and differentiation that takes place in defining the male and female subject in the context of war. Males are linked to traits deemed essential for warfare, including courage, chivalry, and strength. At the same time male subjects are differentiated from virtues

deemed 'natural' to the female subject, including compassion, cooperation, and nurturing. (York 1998; Carter 1998; Daly 1984; Elshtain 1987; Ruddick 1989) Women's peaceful nature and their "aversion to risk" (Baksh et al., 2005) are described in various texts as stemming from their 'natural' capacity as mothers. (Daly 1984; Elshtain 1987; Ruddick 1989) In effect, roles that are depicted as "natural" for women during conflict are associated with their reproductive capacities and their ability to nurture, cooperate, and sustain life. Therefore, instead of soldiering, women's primary roles during conflict are often described as "wives, girlfriends, and mothers, waiting for their soldiers to return and caring for wounded." (Carter 1998, 33) Jodi York summarizes this approach: "Women are inherently concerned about peace because of their special connection to life preservation and moral guardianship." (York 1998, 19)

Certainly there are a growing number of researchers who have been challenging assumptions about the "natural" qualities of men and women- particularly from radical, post-modern and post-structural feminists, critical security studies, post-colonial and development studies. As Tina Johnson remarked, "while it is often suggested that women are naturally non-violent, they have been active participants in modern warfare, especially in civil and liberation wars." (2005, 21) Feminist international relations scholars in particular have highlighted the historical contributions of women during war.[46] In Africa specifically there is evidence that women "have had a long history of participation in the liberation struggles of their continent" including organized resistance movements, protests, and bearing arms. (Morris 1993) Despite this

[46] See Sylvester (2005), Biles and Hyndman (2004), Jacobs, Jacobsen and Marchbank (2000), Bouta, Frerks and Bannon (2004), Meintjes, Pillay and Turshen (2001), Turshen and Twagiramariya (1998), Cockburn and Zarkov (2002), Whitworth (2004), Enloe (1982, 2007), Moser and Clark (2001), Waller and Rycengra (2001), Sweetman (2005), Carpenter (2006), and Sjoberg (2006).

burgeoning research, the message that "men are natural soldiers and women are not" remains prominent in many mainstream messages about war, including the media and government and NGO reports.

> Isha joined the AFRC in her early teens. She reported that she burned public and private premises as well as living pro-government forces. Isha refused to go through the DDR: "I thought my looks can carry me a long way…and I cannot trust the program." Isha also mentioned her fear of the stigma that would be cast on her and her family if she publicly participated in the DDR. For Isha, the DDR was merely "information propaganda and money-making." She claimed that "boys had more support" because they were feared while females were not.

Women as "Victims" and "Perpetrators"

Although it is indisputable that women and girls as well as men and boys experienced trauma, abuse, malnourishment, fear, and neglect, the manner in which females are consistently and continually portrayed as victims- often helpless victims- must be critically examined. Criminology literature is useful in examining how both "victim" and "perpetrator" have traditionally been characterized in relation to women. Historically in the criminology literature, the "ideal victim" has been defined as a powerless woman or girl. (Madriz 1997) Esther Madriz describes the stereotypical victim as a respectable woman who is weaker than her attacker and attacked while engaged in a respectable activity and at an appropriate time. (1997) Klien and Madriz also point out that while female victims comply with the notion of "ideal" victim, while women perpetrators deviate from norms associated with so-called feminine behavior. In fact, Merry Morash has concluded that "females who do not conform to common ideas about appropriate and moral behaviour and appearance for girls and women are sometimes not taken seriously as victims or are blamed for their own victimization." (Morash 2006, 137) Thus, the distinction between perpetrator and victim encodes

"appropriate" gender roles for males and females. By doing so, an entire set of assumptions and stereotypes that exert informal control over women and girls are sustained. (Madriz 1997, 32) This literature relating to soldiering and criminal behaviour demonstrates that the assumption that women are not typically soldiers extends beyond the Sierra Leone case. Certainly, Sierra Leone is not the only country where gender biases exist in relation to appropriate roles during war.

Women as Soldiers in Sierra Leone

I draw on my interviews with a sample group of 25 women "associated with the fighting forces" in Sierra Leone to illustrate multiple roles and activities of women during the 11 year civil conflict. All 25 women responded positively to the question: "Would you define yourself as a former soldier?" Women were quick to point out which armed group they were a part of, what rank they held, and what roles they carried out. For example: one woman identified herself as a commander with the RUF; another woman specified that she was a soldier "because [she] was given one week training on how to fire a gun and subsequently became active;"[47] another woman identified as a soldier because she "took part in most of the horrible activities of the evil conflict in SL;"[48] and, several women admitted that they voluntarily joined a particular faction. Women even reported going to places like Burkina Faso for military training. [49]

The duties carried out by this group of women were incredibly diverse. When asked "what were your role(s) during the conflict," 19 of the 25 women declared that they were involved in active combat duties. The variety of responses to this question indicates the range of the roles carried out by women during the war. These responses

[47] Personal Interview with Interviewee #18, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 12, 2005
[48] Personal Interview with Interviewee #4, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 11, 2005
[49] Personal Interview with Interviewee #12, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 5, 2005

include: "leading lethal attacks," "screening and killing pro-rebel civilians," "combatant," "poison/inject captured war prisoners with either lethal injection or acid," "I trained with [the AFRC] bush camp how to shoot a gun," "killing and maiming pro-government forces and civilians," "gun trafficking," "killing," "planning and carrying out attacks on public places," "do execution on commanders of my age group," "fighting," "murdered children," "weapon cleaner."[50] Although a significant number of the women admitted to acting as sex slaves, the vast list of duties carried out by these women defied any strict gendered notions about the roles of women during conflict. In fact, Edward Anague from CEDAW reported "some of the most vicious soldiers and commanders were women." (Anague 2005) From these interviews it becomes clear that women and girls participated in all facets of war including active combat, commanding, and military training.

Beyond Gendered Stereotypes

My interviews with female soldiers in Sierra Leone demonstrate that women were actively involved in combat. In addition, these interviews show that the answer to the question- why did so few women and girls go through the DDR?- is much more complicated than- 'they were left behind.' Women's explanations for why they did not go through the DDR ranged from "I had escaped and was trying to find my parents,"[51] to "I had [another] mission in the Ivory Coast."[52] No women I spoke with indicated that they felt 'left out' of the DDR and very few women indicated that they thought the DDR would have been helpful for them.

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[50] Personal Interview with Interviewees #4,12,38,9,21,22,23,4,18,19,2, 25, 2 Freetown and Makeni Sierra Leone. December 16, 2005.
[51] Personal Interview with Interviewee #18, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 11, 2005.
[52] Personal Interview with Interviewee #6, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 11, 2005.

To begin with, a significant number of the women I interviewed had an incredibly negative perception of the DDR process and did not see it as an attractive option for them post-conflict. For example, descriptions of the program included "a trap to screen anti-government combatants."[53] Some women claimed that they were not convinced that the program benefited anybody other than international NGOs including Sonia[54] who reported, "we were used as everything for them [NGOs/international aid community] to have and be everything they want to be in their war and political ambitions." The program was also described as a tactical "use of ex-combatants as tools for fund raising" for NGO workers to "enrich themselves."[55] Another woman commented, "all I saw was expensive vehicles being used by those NGOs and so much bureaucracy."[56]

An additional concern expressed by some former female soldiers was their distrust of the Sierra Leone government and the organizations involved in the DDR. Some concluded that the "flamboyant promises" made to ex-combatants were not fulfilled.[57] This distrust also stemmed from accusations of corruption with "funds [being] directed to families of program officials" in the program.[58] One woman believed the DDR was "just about men with guns;"[59] while another described it as a "gun for money"[60] program directed at male rebels. These testimonies demonstrate that negative perceptions impacted women and girls' decisions not to participate in the DDR. In these cases, these women did not feel "left out" of the process; rather, they

[53] Personal Interview with Interviewee #19, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 14, 2005.
[54] Personal Interview with Interviewee #48, Makeni, Sierra Leone. December 14, 2005.
[55] Personal Interview with Interviewee #39, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 11, 2005.
[56] Personal Interview with Interviewee #47, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 5, 2005.
[57] Personal Interview with Interviewee #11, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 11, 2005.
[58] Personal Interview with Interviewee #29, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 14, 2005.
[59] Personal Interview with Interviewee #8, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 11, 2005.
[60] Personal Interview with Interviewee #6, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 5, 2005.

chose to avoid it because they were critical of the program and the way it was implemented.

In addition to negative perceptions of the DDR, women listed various other reasons why they did not participate in the process. Initially, the disarmament process for adults required soldiers to present a gun to be eligible for benefits; however, during the last phases of the DDR the possession of a gun was not required. For children, the possession of a gun was never a requirement.[61] Despite the fact that women and girls without guns were eligible for the DDR, a striking number of the women interviewed did not believe they could have participated in the process because they did not possess a gun. [62] Given that the conflict in Sierra Leone lasted over 10 years, involved various armed factions, and erupted in several phases, each individual combatant did not necessarily possess his/her own weapon. The types of weapons used to fight were diverse and included machetes. These weapons were acquired, lost or stolen, and transferred from one area and faction to another. Although numerous women I interviewed admitted to carrying and using guns; several admitted that they had their guns taken away from them before the DDR while others told me they left their weapons behind when they escaped from their armed group. In some of these cases, commanders or comrades deliberately took weapons from women and girls before the disarmament process so they would not be eligible for the program. (Shiaka 2005) In addition, both males and females who performed support roles during the conflict

[61] DDR procedures for children defined eligibility as follows "aged 7 or above; have learned to 'cock and load'; have been trained; have spent 6 months or above in the fighting forces." (UNICEFB 2005)
[62] Personal Interview with Interviewees #3,11,14,62, 64, 35, 59, 41. Freetown and Makeni Sierra Leone. December 5-16, 2005

including domestic tasks, acting as spies or messengers, and looters may or may not have ever possessed a gun.

The division of the DDR process into separate programs for adults and children did not take into account the local definitions and understandings of "child" and "adult" in Sierra Leone. Joseph Momoh, founder of Children Associated with the War (CAW) explained how local perceptions of "child" and "adult" differ from Western legal definitions. For each ethnic group in Sierra Leone, there are cultural ceremonies that mark the passing from childhood to adulthood. For most ethnic groups in the country, ceremonies take place within separate male and female secret societies. These groups are responsible for educating members about cultural traditions, histories, and skills and trades deemed essential for survival and success within the community. There has been growing scrutiny of women's secret societies because some ceremonies marking a female's transition to adulthood, or bondo ceremonies, include female circumcision. Bondo ceremonies were disrupted during the civil conflict and, as a result, there was some confusion as to the "status" of women and girls in their communities and their eligibility for the DDR. Momoh explains,

> … some girls that were around the age of 16 would feel strange going through the DDR because they were not seen as adults because they didn't go through ceremonies but they didn't see themselves as children because they had had sex and some had children….You can have a baby but if you haven't gone through the ceremonies you are not considered mature enough to have a child and you are still considered a child. A mother is someone who has gone through the ceremonies... If you give birth to a child you are not an adult and you cannot carry out adult responsibilities so that is why some parents don't want to send their girls through the DDR because their girls had babies and it was shameful. (Momoh 2005)

At the end of the war 28 of the 50 women I interviewed would have been under the age of 18 and therefore defined as a child according to the Convention on the Rights of the

Child (United Nations 1990). These women would have been eligible for the children's DDR; however, a surprising number did not see themselves as children either because they were already mothers[63] or, because of the loss of parents, some had taken on adult roles for a number of years.

As already mentioned, one of the reasons why girls and women did not possess weapons is that they had escaped from their armed group and had left their weapons behind. Women who escaped from their armed group avoided the DDR not only because they did not have a weapon but also because they returned to their families and began to disassociate themselves from the armed groups. Of the fifty women I interviewed in Makeni, 44 had escaped from the armed group they were associated with. For example, Fatima explained that she did not see herself as eligible for the disarmament process because she had escaped and "wasn't with the rebels any longer." [64] Another woman told me that her priority upon escaping was finding her parents rather than going to the DDR.[65]

In a way, escapee women left the DDR behind because they no longer saw themselves as soldiers or no longer wanted to be connected with armed forces. It makes sense that women who had risked their lives to escape from an armed group would not want to join them again for a disarmament process. In order for the DDR to have met the needs of the large number of women and girls who escaped from the armed forces, the DDR should have specifically targeted "escapees" by making efforts to inform them

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[63] Over half of the women I interviewed who were under the age of 18 during the conflict also gave birth before the age of 18.
[64] Personal Interview with Interviewee #49, Freetown Sierra Leone. December 5, 2005.
[65] Personal Interview with Interviewee #1, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 15, 2005.

that they were eligible for the DDR and that their safety would be ensured during the process.

Escapees also mentioned that fear of stigmatization kept them away from disarmament facilities. The shame associated with going through the DDR and being connected to the armed forces was mentioned by a number of women. Women who had escaped either chose to avoid the stigma caused by going through the DDR or, for some, their families prevented them from participating because of the shame that would be brought to their families. The stigma associated with the DDR was a result of both local attitudes about the armed groups and the actual process of the DDR. Although the people of Sierra Leone have done a remarkable job "forgiving and forgetting" the atrocities that took place during the war and accepting the former rebels and soldiers back into communities, former soldiers- particularly women- faced stigma through their association with armed groups. Women described the DDR as "shameful" and spoke about the negative effect it would have on their families.[66] Also, some women were anxious to start a new life and to break ties with their lives as soldiers.[67] Their association with programs designed for former soldiers meant that they were continually identified with the conflict. This was not an option for women who "didn't want people to know that [they] took part in [the] mad war."[68]

In terms of the structure of the program, one of the procedures that was linked to stigmatization was the identification process for former soldiers. During the disarmament, each soldier had his/her picture taken and was given an ID card which

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[66] Personal Interview with Interviewees #53, 17, 67, 40. Freetown and Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[67] Personal Interview with Interviewees #7, 23, 47. Freetown and Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[68] Personal Interview with Interviewee #48, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.

made him/her eligible for training programs, financial assistance, or "start up packages." Several of the women I talked to expressed unease with this process. They did not want their "faces to be on the computer" [69] and felt nervous that their photos would be kept by immigration and that they would "never be able to leave the country." [70]

Stigmatization was a major source of insecurity for former female combatants. One woman told me she did not want to be "seen publicly as an ex-combatant" out of "fear of retaliation" from community members or other rebel factions. [71] Similarly, a young woman told me she had reason to believe that if she showed up at the DDR she would be killed by the Special Security Death Squad, a brutal specialized armed group. [72] Given the fact that the DDR took place at the dubious end of a 11 year civil war, some women and girls were not convinced that the fighting was truly over and did not want to openly label themselves as soldiers out of concern for their security. Another, far less talked about, aspect of the fear associated with the DDR is the use of witchcraft or "magic" by rebel forces. One woman explained that her role during the conflict was to "do concoctions and oracle activities in the holy shrine" for the Civil Defence Forces. [73] She told me she was "warned not to appear [at the DDR]…[because of] fear that the demon of protection during the war will consume me and my family and all CDF." [74]

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[69] Personal Interview with Interviewee #5, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[70] Personal Interview with Interviewee #35, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[71] Personal Interview with Interviewee #21, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[72] Personal Interview with Interviewee #17, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[73] Personal Interview with Interviewee #3, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[74] Personal Interview with Interviewee #3, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.

Pride was an additional theme in the responses given by women who were asked about their attendance at the DDR. Several women I interviewed indicated either that they had "better plans" for themselves than the DDR or that they felt the DDR was "below them" somehow.[75] One young woman told me she avoided the DDR because she had been promised by the head of the Civil Defence Forces that she would be given "a lucrative house and educational support" if she remained with the forces.[76] Another woman told me she had money from the war and did not need the handouts offered at the DDR.[77] I was also told by a woman that she thought her "looks would carry [her] a long way" and that she did not need the resources offered by the DDR.[78] Another informed me that she was "too popular" to go to the DDR and that people would recognize her and target her and her family.[79] After reading numerous accounts of the oppression and victimization of women during and after the conflict, it was surprising to hear the pride- even arrogance- women associate with their role as a soldier. For some women who had achieved higher ranks within the warring factions, the notion of attending the DDR with lower ranking soldiers was insulting. One woman explained, "I was not convinced to see myself parade before people I had authority over for years."[80] Several other women mentioned their disapproval of the "segregation within the command ranks" at the DDR.[81] The lessons learned from the DDR in Sierra Leone do not account for these shifts in power that occurred during the civil war (and numerous other wars) and the difficulty women had with losing this power.

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[75] Personal Interview with Interviewee #7, 29, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[76] Personal Interview with Interviewee #7, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[77] Personal Interview with Interviewee #29, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[78] Personal Interview with Interviewee #14, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[79] Personal Interview with Interviewee #63, Freetown Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[80] Personal Interview with Interviewee #38, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.
[81] Personal Interview with Interviewees #19, 33. Makeni, Sierra Leone. December 2005.

These interviews indicate the complexities associated with women's decisions not to participate in the DDR. Programs for female victims of the war, abducted girls and women, and girls "left behind" were developed in the absence of women's own accounts of what roles they took up during the war, how they perceived the DDR and why they did not participate in the DDR. Although these were "choices" made in extremely constrained circumstances; by ignoring women's accounts of why they made these decisions, useful lessons to be derived from the DDR become buried. The decisions that female soldiers made in relation to the DDR should be seen as political decisions and must be taken into account when considering the effectiveness and impact of the DDR process.

Beyond Followers and Sex Slaves: EnGendering Representations

A variety of titles were constructed to avoid calling women and girls soldiers, including: "camp followers," "abductees," "sex slaves," "domestic slaves," or "girls and women associated with the fighting forces" and "vulnerable groups associated with armed movements." One of the facilitators of the DDR program admitted, "women were just seen as camp followers even though some were active combatants and some went through military training." (Ferrero 2005) In fact, even major international organizations that helped oversee the DDR process have been reluctant to name women and girls as combatants. "The Girls Left Behind" program, designed to benefit women and girls that should have included in the DDR, makes little reference to the title "soldiers." (UNICEF 2005) In an hour-long interview with Glenis Taylor, a senior director at UNICEF Sierra Leone, she never used the term soldier to refer to these

women and girls. Instead she identified them as "girls with the fighting forces" and "girls who were involved with the fighting forces." (Taylor 2005)

The logical manoeuvring that categorizes females out of the rank of soldier goes something like this: most females acted in support roles for the fighting forces rather than in combat roles. Therefore females were primarily non-combatants- and, non-combatants are not soldiers. This logic is fallacious both because of the problematic assumption that women and girls were not combatants and because it implies that the support work carried out by females during conflict does not render them soldiers. Vivi Stavrou summarizes the implications of not recognizing various types of labour during the conflict:

> Not labelling the work of non-combatant women soldiers as soldiering, continues the gender discrimination of the division of labour whereby critical work that is essential for survival, is simply considered a natural extension of women's domestic obligations and hence neither worthy of remuneration nor significant enough for women to qualify for training and livelihoods programs. (Stavrou 2005)

Even though the term "soldier" refers to anyone who is a member of an armed group, questions and concerns over the distinction between *combatant* and *soldier* have been raised in relation to women and girls. A review of the capacities, ranks, and services of any army reveals that a variety of duties and contributions are required for almost all combat operations; however, typically there are few who question if male officers who fulfill support roles such as medical operations or communications are "real soldiers." When men act as porters, cleaners, domestic help, or messengers during war there is little debate about the extent to which they deserve the soldier title. However, there has been extensive debate about the functions of female soldiers in Sierra Leone and the extent to which their work "counts" as soldiering. While great

effort was made by post-conflict policy makers to name women and girls something other than soldiers, "men involved with the military in support functions are defined as soldiers, and not as 'men involved in armed groups or forces,' or as men directly associated with the war;' or as dependants of male or female combatants." (Hansen 2006, 99)

The manner in which male and female soldiers have been categorized post-conflict has had several interrelated impacts: first, stripping women and girls of their titles as soldiers by distinguishing them from "true" or "real" combatants depoliticised their roles during the conflict; second, as development grows evermore concerned with people and issues identified as security concerns, depoliticising the role of women and girls during the conflict meant that they were not targeted as primary beneficiaries for the DDR program and other reintegration initiatives; third, politicizing and securitizing the DDR process for male soldiers and de-prioritizing and de-politicizing women has meant that the reintegration process for women has largely been seen as a social process, a "returning to normal" that would happen "naturally." In effect, the manoeuvring to designate females as camp followers, victims, wives or any designation other than soldier should be seen as an example of identity formation through policy – or discipline. This categorization removes them from policy discourses, absolves policy-makers from addressing them as a category, and reinforces gendered assumptions about women's "true" roles in conflict.

> Saphie was conscripted by the AFRC/RUF at the age of 14. Her roles during the conflict included fighting, gun trafficking, acting as a 'bush wife,' and acting as a spy. Saphie explained why she did not go through the DDR in the following way: "I was excluded by my commander as they took my gun from me- they symbol to guarantee me to be part of the reintegration program." She heard that the

program was useful and especially was envious of the $300 disarmament payment.[82] Saphie also heard that ex-combatants were reunited with their parents and were given medical attention and clothing. For Saphie, the strengths of the program included the huge amount of international support; however, she felt that the program did not fulfill its promises to ex-combatants. She felt that female soldiers were deceived and were not given sufficient information about the program: "girl soldiers were part of the 'real' people that mattered to the program." She also felt that most reintegration initiatives ended prematurely and heard about embezzlement of program funds by officials. Saphie reported that she finds her current situation frustrating as she is "just trying to survive" despite poverty.

Securitized subject or Social problem?

Programs designed to address the destruction of social networks in Sierra Leone provide another example of the variance in how males and females were conceptualized by post-conflict policy makers. NGO and aid agency documents often refer to the destruction of social networks and norms as one of the most significant outcomes of the civil conflict in Sierra Leone. Duffield argues that NGOs "often frame their projects post-conflict in terms of re-establishment of social cohesion." (Duffield 2001, 123) He contends that the representation of cultural breakdown gives impetus to NGOs and funding agencies to introduce and justify "new forms of identity and social cohesion." (Duffield 2001, 125) Thus, programs aimed at re-constructing social networks benefit from depictions of local or indigenous relationships and customs as eroded or collapsed.

Although the destabilization of the community and social networks in Sierra Leone is described similarly in various agency documents, the declared impacts of this

[82] This amount was paid to ex-combatants as a start-up grant during the first phase; however this amount was not given to all combatants as funding ran out and training opportunities began to be suggested.

condition for men and women are vastly at odds. In particular, "idle youth" are identified as a particular concern for the social reconstruction of Sierra Leone. "Idleness" is described as a problem in relation to men and boys; specific concerns include the fear that these men and boys will reorganize or "let loose" and instigate another conflict or participate in organized crime. (World Bank 2005) The World Bank has defined the term "youth" in this context as referring to "predominantly men who are excluded, unable to provide for a family and are perceived as a potential *security threat*." (2005) If men are seen to be naturally violent then it follows that if they are left to their own devices, they may take up arms again or join in organized crime. Some reports have argued that groups of idle men caused the outbreak of war in Sierra Leone in the first place, and idleness could lead to another war. (McKinley 2002)

There has been comparable analysis of the impacts of social disorder and for women and girls in Sierra Leone. There are indications of displaced and unemployed women and girls; however, they are not characterized as security threats. Instead, the concern for women and girls is that poverty, combined with the lack of social norms and regulations will encourage women and girls to turn to prostitution. One account of post-conflict Sierra Leone indicated, "because of extreme poverty, the dislocation of families and the breakdown of social structures during the war, many girls, and some boys, are engaging in prostitution and sex in exchange for economic and other benefits." (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 2002) Another report noted that it was "particularly those displaced from their homes and with few resources [who] resorted to prostitution as a means to support themselves and their children." (U.S. Department of State 2004)

While there is concern that idle men will become violent, the greatest concern regarding idle women and girls is their participation in prostitution. The logic seems to be that men are naturally aggressive and may manipulate this power in desperate situations whereas women are naturally nurturing and may manipulate their bodies in desperate situations. Put another way, under conditions of collapsed or absent social regulations, men will become violent while women will become overtly sexual. These characterizations sustain gendered binaries associated with conflict and reinforce the nuclear family as a source of stability and "normalcy." The result of this characterization is that male subjects in post-conflict programming are prioritized as security concerns while women are regarded as a social concern. Heterosexual marriage and the family unit is presented as a solution to the breakdown of social structure for both men and women.

> Kadie was recruited by the Kamajors before she was 12 years old. Her duties as a soldier included spying, "toting property," and being used as a sex slave for her commander. She recounted that she did not go through the DDR because "the Kamajors prevented me because they have a taboo that they do not touch or come close to women- but that was a lie….they use women as combatants." Kadie admitted she did not know the details of the program; however she had heard of the foreign involvement and the large amounts of money directed through the program. Kadie expressed frustration at how females were treated in post-conflict Sierra Leone: "all of us were combatants but treated as house wives and sex slaves."

Reintegration or Domestication?

Historically, conflict has been described as a time where gender roles are challenged and patriarchal structures are destabilized. Women often take up new roles during the conflict and, theoretically, the post-conflict period "provides an opportunity for women

to challenge traditional gender roles, create spaces for new identities and imagine new possibilities for themselves." (Baksh-Soodeen) Despite the prospect of war inspiring a rethinking of gender orders, in a disappointing number of cases "gender liberation" is not lasting. (Rehn and Sirleaf in Handrahan 2004, 429-445) Handrahan has pointed out "when women are allowed or encouraged to participate, it is male leaders who are controlling and creating the conflict within which women are given a temporary place. Elise Barth attempts to explain the focus on 'returning' for women post-conflict:

> When a war is over, women's contributions during the conflict rarely receive recognition…whereas men and women are encouraged to act out similar roles as fellow soldiers in an army or guerrilla movement, post-conflict society encourages difference between the genders. This has important consequences for former soldier women. Female ex-combatants, who have broken rules of traditional behaviour and gender roles, risk being marginalized during the rebuilding process. In many cases, female ex-soldiers prefer to conceal their military past rather than face social disapproval. (Barth 2003)

Ruth Jacobson et al. argue that this about-face in terms of acceptable behaviours represents the divesting of power away from women. They warn readers to "observe and record the ways in which large-scale reconstruction within, or of, nation-states and regions involves a realignment, and/or re-creation of, patriarchal power and control."(Jacobson et al 2000, 51) Equating reintegration for women with "returning to normal" has essentially translated into the reconstruction and reinstitution of "traditional" (read marginalized and subordinate) gender norms and roles. The exodus from political activity and positions of power has also characterized the "return to normal" for women and girls post-conflict. In effect, as Barakat and Ozerdem note, "'post-conflict' is a misnomer for women, so too are the notions of reconstruction and rehabilitation. Both concepts assume an element of going back, restoring to a position or capacity that previously existed." (2005, 37)

The displacement caused by the DDR is one of the most tragic examples of how post-conflict programs in Sierra Leone privileged men. During the DDR, there were several demobilization centres located around the country. Soldiers that wanted to disarm had to appear at one of the locations where they were given an identification card and money, a start up package for a trade such as carpentry, or a coupon for training in a trade. The most common trades for men included carpentry, masonry, taxi driver, tailor, and mechanic. Many of the training centres operated by international or local NGOs were located in towns distant from the demobilization centres. Also, most of the trades offered could only be lucrative in an urban setting. Therefore, numerous ex-combatants travelled extensively after the conflict: first to the demobilization centre, second to the training facility, and possibly third to a city or town to practice their trade. It is generally disregarded that the male participants often left one or more women in "the bush" or the rural areas with children they had fathered. Catherine Zainab Tarawally explained how some men went to Liberia to go through the Liberian disarmament program to receive DDR benefits a second time. (2005) At no point during this process were men asked if they had "wives" or if they had impregnated women during the conflict. Moreover, no organizations I interviewed knew of any initiatives to encourage men to take responsibility for the children they may have fathered during the conflict. The process of demobilization was an opportunity to start fresh for male combatants. They could leave the armed group they were with, abandon any relationships they may have had with women, deny any children they may have fathered and find a new life with a new career in a new location. Women and girls were not given this same opportunity. According to my research, the majority of female soldiers

did not go through the DDR process and many of them had given birth to children for whom they were solely responsible.

As mentioned in Chapter One, both Jacqueline Stevens and Judith Butler have expressed the need for an examination of the "'materialization' of the ways that Foucauldian regulatory powers produce, in this case, sex." (1998, 23) The manner in which gender is addressed in post-conflict policies signals how NGOs and development agencies act as "regulatory powers" to "produce sex." Post-conflict development policies serve as indicators as to what behaviours and roles are acceptable in the post-conflict state. For women, acceptable roles are defined strictly in terms of the nuclear family unit. Donzelot, Foucault and Stevens have each described the benefits of the nuclear family as regulatory powers. Female soldiers contradict the founding logic of the nuclear family as natural. First, they defy traditional feminine characteristic such as peaceful, domestic, balancing and submissive. Second, women's natural roles as mothers and regulators of the family are completely confounded by politically violent women. Third, they challenge assumptions about what women and men "do" during war. Policies that encourage women to enter family units do not necessarily result in re-integration or a return to "pre"-conflict social relationships; rather, they serve to discipline women and girls by signalling to them "appropriate" and "normal" behaviour and social relationships.

The New "Normal"

For the case of Sierra Leone, the role of the development community in reshaping gender roles during the reintegration process cannot be overlooked. Organizations in Sierra Leone largely treated the reintegration of women and girls as a social process, a

"returning to normal" that would either happen "naturally," with time, or through sensitization- meaning talking to communities and families about the need to "take women and girls back." In particular, there was great concern about the "marriagability" of female soldiers largely because it was assumed that they had been raped, or they had given birth to children out of wedlock. (Shelper 2002) In some cases, grandmothers offered to raise the children of former soldiers so that they could marry without men having to worry about supporting "rebel children."[83] Some organizations even encouraged former female soldiers to marry their rape perpetrators in order to avoid shame and to blend into the community. (Shelper 2002; Baldi and MacKenzie 2007)

Women were given few "choices" in their reintegration process: silence or stigma, limited training or nothing, isolation or marriage, primary parent or nothing. Each of these "choices" was seen as an opportunity to hide their identities as soldiers and to "blend in" "naturally" to the community and family unit. Stevens argues, "to 'naturalize' is to express the necessity of a form of being or practice, to make something seem impervious to human intention and immutable." (Stevens 1998, 22) Understood this way, "naturalizing" the process of reintegration for women and girls in Sierra Leone meant that organizations reinforced the nuclear family unit at the same time as they justified their limited attention to female soldiers.

By encouraging women and girls to return to their "normal places" in the community, any new roles or positions of authority that they may have held during the conflict are stripped from them and any opportunities to rethink and reshape gender

[83] Personal interview, interviewee #42: 16 December 2005.

stereotypes and hierarchies are destroyed. "Normal women" become defined primarily as victims of the war while women and girls who were soldiers, who were perpetrators of violence and destruction, who volunteered to participate in conflict or who were empowered by the conflict, become categorized as deviants. Within criminology literature this categorization of acceptable and unacceptable female behaviour is sometimes called the Madonna/Whore duality whereby "good women" are defined as normal in contrast to bad women who are criminals. In this case crime was viewed as "a perversion of or rebellion against [females'] natural feminine roles." (Klein 1973, 5) In Hansen's reading of Derrida, she concludes, "the positive value ascribed to 'women' is preconditioned upon women's acceptance of the subject position bestowed upon them. If 'women' were to be constructed, or construct themselves, as less motherly, less caring, and less publicly passive, their supplementary privilege would in all likelihood be suspended. (Hansen 2001, 21)

Initial Recommendations and Conclusions

In post-conflict Sierra Leone, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations and aid agencies have funding, networks, and influence that garner them significant positions of power in comparison to Sierra Leone's shaky government. As a result of this power, these organizations possess the ability to selectively securitize issues and determine their priority. Given the radicalization of development, NGOs and aid agencies have a particular stake in designating a societal phenomenon a security concern requiring immediate attention. Securitizing an issue is an effective method for garnering funding and support as it indicates that an urgent response is required in order to restore peace. As NGOs and development agencies take on the role of the state, it is

essential that these organizations be scrutinized as political bodies and held accountable for the impacts of their actions.

Further examination into the reordering that takes place through programs like the DDR in the name of development and security must be taken in order to expose the canyons of silence that continue to surround women's and girls' experiences. As Carolyn Nordstrom has noted, "what we hear and do not hear about the world we occupy is no accident.... Shaping knowledge, and a lack of knowledge, constitutes a basic element of power. Silences, spheres where knowledge has been kept from public awareness- are undeniably political." (Nordstrom 1998, 81) The Sierra Leone DDR process cannot be used as a model without accounting for women and girls' own depictions of their roles and experiences during the conflict.

The construction of "soldier" by post-conflict policy-makers in Sierra Leone can be understood as a process of exclusion whereby 'soldier' is defined in relation to a securitized male in contrast to the de-securitized natural female. In the case of Sierra Leone, the construction of females in post-conflict as victims lacking agency, and post-conflict programs based on this representation, have dismissed, isolated, and silenced a vast cohort of women and girls. In addition, this construction relegates them spatially to the private realm- well away from the attention given to securitized and politicized matters. This categorization creates a two-stream reintegration process for males and females: reintegration for males is viewed as a security priority necessary for attaining peace while reintegration for females largely takes place in the so-called private or domestic realm as a "natural" process.

The limitations placed on women and girls due to the association of "stability" and security with the restoration of social networks- primarily the family unit- demand further investigation. The relationship between notions of "stability," "peace," "victim" and "violent," "threatening," "conflict" to presumptions about femininity and masculinity must be unpacked in order to illustrate how security discourses not only continue to discount the role of women and girls in otherwise securitized activities but also contribute to the reconstruction of 'normal' female subjects as benevolent, nurturing, or victims in contrast to violent and aggressive males. Women and girls have been victimized during conflict; however they have participated in violence out of coercion and out of choice. There are obvious limits to theorizing about violent women that must be acknowledged. Feminist scholars in particular can contribute a great deal by continuing to discover ways to intercept security discourses and to disrupt characterizations of the female victim. Feminists also need to contemplate whether there is room within feminist work on violence, the state, and the political and domestic sphere to theorize about women who choose to be violent in the name of the state and women who choose to inflict sexual violence.

In addition, there is a need to reconsider the positive association of 'reintegration' and 'reconstruction' with progress and development. As Krug reminds us "it is rarely considered that encouraging a return to what is considered 'normal' after a conflict may reflect the patriarchal order before the conflict where women's rights might have been routinely violated. Or that the international community's definition of 'normal' tolerates high levels of violence against women in their own societies." (Krug 2002) The reintegration process for females is called 'a return to normal' regardless of

the obvious policies and restrictions that relegated it and despite the gender hierarchies and stereotypes that were re-created in the process. The participation of women and girls in traditionally male dominated activities such as war can no longer be overlooked. The effectiveness of post-conflict programming, an inclusive transition from conflict to peace, and gender equality post-conflict has been compromised because of this omission.

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Chapter Four
Ordained Empowerment: Reconstruction, Self-policing and Neoliberal Redemption

One of the questions included in my structured interviews with 50 former soldiers in Sierra Leone was: Do you feel like women have more power now than they had before the war? I left the interpretation of "power" up to them. Although I anticipated that the answers to this question would shed some light on how the lives of these women had changed since the war, I underestimated the significance of the question to my research. What initially struck me was that this was one of the only questions that the women consistently answered in English rather than their first languages of Kriole, Mende, or Temne. During the first 10 interviews, women answered this question with phrases like: "we have 50/50 now"; "now there is equality"; "we have human rights"; and "we are independent." I was encouraged but also confused by these initial answers.

What also struck me about women's answers to this question about power was how much they differed from their answers to other questions related to their current life and the reintegration process in Sierra Leone. The same women who told me they had equal rights and had "50/50" complained of poverty, joblessness, and the burden of raising children who were born of rape. Finally, I asked 3 of the women to explain what they meant by terms like 50/50, equal rights, and human rights. I asked them to tell me in what ways they had 50/50- did they control half the money in their household?; Did they make half the decisions with their husband?; Did they get to choose who they voted for? The women laughed at me. None of them could say yes to any of my questions but they explained that they had participated in a human rights workshop

several months earlier. At the workshop, international staff discussed the ideas of human rights and gender equality with them.

All these catch phrases the women were telling me were actually the phrases they had been taught in the "awareness raising" workshop. The women explained that although there was little evidence of equality or 50/50 in their lives, they assumed this was how they should answer the question about women's situation in Sierra Leone. Essentially, I was white, and some white delegates had taught the workshop on human rights, so they had inferred that these were the terms I wanted to hear. I have to say, I learned more in that laughter filled conversation with the three women than I did from the entire 50 answers to a question about power. I was told about the challenges of infidelity, how poverty and stigma make it difficult to leave your husband when he "sneaks" from the home, and how stifled women feel by the multiple pressures they have to work and to raise and feed their children.

The selective language that many of the women used in their responses to me was indicative of several important aspects of post-conflict development. First, the power relations clearly taking place not only within my interviews but, in the larger context, between international aid and development workers, researchers and Sierra Leoneans; second, the significance of language in development projects and programs; finally, the contrasts between how terms were used by the development community, and how they were interpreted by the "subjects" of development. After this experience, the more research I conducted, the more aware I became of some of the key concepts and catch phrases used in development discourses. In particular, I continued to notice the use of "empowerment," especially in relation to women in Sierra Leone. All kinds of

reintegration programs were claiming to "empower" women to rebuild their lives and change their destinies, yet few of these programs defined empowerment or included the beneficiaries' own interpretations or conceptions of power or empowerment.

The specific questions this chapter addresses include: how is empowerment used by development and aid agencies and organizations and what is the genealogy of this concept within these discourses?; what are some of the ways "women's empowerment" has been theorized?; how is the genealogy of empowerment related to participatory discourses?; how was empowerment used in reintegration programs for female soldiers? These questions add to the overall aim of this dissertation, which is to critically examine the reintegration process for female soldiers in Sierra Leone. This chapter is similar to Chapter Three and four in that it aims to compare my interviews with former female soldiers to dominant representations of women in development discourses; the uniqueness of this chapter lies in the methodological approach and the specific focus on policy.

I seek to answer the central questions of this chapter first through a brief overview of feminist conceptions of empowerment, power and emancipation. This is followed by a discussion of participatory research and its use of empowerment. The major critiques of participatory approaches and the use of empowerment within these approaches will also be employed to support this analysis. This will lead to a comprehensive analysis of the major actors in the empowerment "issue networks" and an analysis of how empowerment is currently being used by these dominant aid and development actors. The purpose here is not to find the "true" meaning of empowerment; rather, this chapter seeks to identify empowerment as an idea that is part

of larger discourses that have been used strategically to convey particular messages about women and war. Finally, I focus on reintegration programs for women in Sierra Leone as a case study of the limitations of "empowerment" initiatives

Methodology

Throughout the dissertation I use discourse analysis as a methodology. This is primarily because my dissertation is concerned with disparate representations of women in post-conflict Sierra Leone. Understanding empowerment policies as disciplinary techniques requires a thorough analysis of the language used in these policies. In this chapter I provide a genealogy of empowerment from feminist literature to development discourses before looking specifically at the ways in which empowerment and reintegration programs in Sierra Leone construct female soldiers, constrain their behavior, and recast appropriate social roles for women.

The incorporation of empowerment within dominant development discourses is examined as a sign of discursive dislocation. As explained in Chapter One, Laclau and Mouffe argue that political struggles or dissent often lead to shifts in hegemonic discourses (1982; 1985) As a result of this dislocation, hegemonic actors will attempt to attach floating signifiers- or words that are no longer attached to readily understood concepts- within new "nodal points" or dominant ideas that structure hegemonic ideas. (1982; 1985) Laclau and Mouffe conclude that these new articulations will largely take the form of empty universals which typically appeal "to vaguely defined notions such as Revolution, Modernisation, the Nation or the People…" (Howarth and Torfing 2005, 16) My discourse analysis is attuned to the ways in which previous criticisms of development and participatory approaches have resulted in shifts in hegemonic

discourses in these areas. I examine this shift and the dominant nodal points involved. Finally, I consider empowerment as an empty signifier within development discourses.

Because empowerment is frequently used in the context of participatory approaches, the critiques of participatory methods provide a useful foundation for a more detailed analysis of the use of empowerment within development discourses. I argue that although participatory approaches have become out of vogue in development, empowerment remains a central term within development discourses. Moreover, the use of empowerment within dominant development discourses differs very little from its conception within participatory discourses. In turn, I believe that the current emphasis on empowerment by development actors represents a discursive dodge- it is an attempt to address criticisms; however, it does not represent a departure from previous hegemonic development approaches.

This point can be illustrated first by considering the ways that empowerment is defined in current development discourses- particularly "women's empowerment." Second, some of the themes associated with development will be examined. One of the more disturbing defining themes of empowerment relates to poverty and economic progress. This has led to the linking of empowerment with neoliberal notions of the independent economic individual, a limited state, and individual responsibility. Third, revisiting more radical or critical conceptions of empowerment in comparison to its use by development actors helps to expose empowerment as an "empty signifier." As Frances Cleaver has noted, radical empowerment discourses were concerned with major transformations of the legal institutions, rights frameworks, and social institutions and with both individual and class action. (Cleaver 2001, 37) He argues that the

incorporation of empowerment discourses within development policies has diluted its "radical and transformatory edge." (2001, 37) It has also been argued that the individualistic focus of empowerment initiatives has meant that empowerment is more about "personal reform than political struggle." (Cornwall 2004, 2)

I have chosen to use my own first person interviews as the source for disrupting dominant discourses of reintegration for women in Sierra Leone. My first task is to investigate what the dominant discourses are in regard to reintegration, development and "women's empowerment." I provide a discourse analysis of NGO, government, and aid agency documents and policies that claim to empower women. I also use co-link analysis and the technology offered by the "Issue Crawler" to determine what issue networks use empowerment and how the term is conceptualized.[84] I then bring in my interviews with over 50 former female soldiers in Sierra Leone to challenge the idea that reintegration programs in Sierra Leone were "empowering."

Theoretical Framework

As indicated in Chapter One, I use Lene Hansen, Michel Foucault, and Jaqueline Stevens to examine the construction of identity by powerful actors. For this chapter, I have also employed Uma Kothari's work on "local knowledge" to frame my analysis of the ways that empowerment policies construct beneficiaries.(2001) Kothari argues that "local," "indigenous," or "people's" knowledge is socially constructed; however, it is used within development policies as if it were some fixed entity. I argue that the recent trend in development programming to valorize "grassroots," "local" or "indigenous" knowledge is not a radical shift in policy or activity; rather, it is a discursive shift aimed at silencing criticisms of exclusionary, or centralized planning. I review how selective

[84] The details of this method are explained in greater detail later in this chapter.

constructions of local knowledge serve to reinstitute power relations favorable to development organizations. Ilan Kapoor summarizes the potential consequences of this dodge: "before long, what were once select dos and don'ts- reflective of elite/institutional complicities- are taken for granted: they become naturalized, passing off as 'consensus', 'community will' or 'traditional knowledge.'" (Kapoor 2005, 1213)

I also employ Foucault's work on regulation to reveal the impacts of development discourses co-opting and silencing "the local." I am particularly sympathetic to Kothari's claim that exclusion may be a source of empowerment while inclusion may actually be a method of regulation and silencing. Using Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemonic incorporation of resistant actors or discourses, Kothari asks us to reconsider empowerment initiatives designed to address marginal groups such as women because "the very act of inclusion, being a participant, can symbolize an exercise of power over an individual."(Kothari 2001, 142)

There are a variety of ways of thinking about empowerment policies as forms of discipline. For example, Kothari argues that participatory projects often "empower" people to participate in the modern sector of developing societies. (Henkel and Stirrat 200, 182) In this way, empowerment policies are disciplining citizens to participate in particular economic and social relations associated with modernity and development. Peter Triantafillou and Mikkel Risbjerg Nielsen have similarly concluded that participation and empowerment initiatives construct "a particular ethics" which is "the ethics of development as a practice of the self by the self through which the target groups are introduced to the specific 'attitude of mind' characteristic of modernity." (Triantafillou and Nielsen 2001, 68) In effect, these policies discipline individuals to

contribute to the national economy, act as consumers, and take responsibility for their own actions and welfare:

> Empowerment in this sense is not just a matter of 'giving power' to formerly disempowered people. The currency in which this power is given is that of the project of modernity. In other words, the attempt to empower people through the projects envisaged and implemented by the practitioners of the new orthodoxy is always an attempt, however benevolent, to reshape the personhood of the participants. It is in this sense that we argue that 'empowerment' is tantamount to what Foucault calls subjection." (Henkel and Stirrat 200, 182)

Feminist voice theory, as explained by Diana Tietjens Meyers is also exceptionally useful for this chapter. (2002) Due to the normative and cultural constraints endemic to narratives, feminist voice theorists argue that empowerment requires that women speak for themselves. Thus, from this approach, one obstacle to empowerment is silence or being spoken for. This stands in contrast to the way empowerment is equated to self-determination and individual liability within development discourses. Although empowerment initiatives claim to be "bottom up" and inclusive, there is almost no inclusion of individual voices, individual accounts, and individual stories in policy documents and reports. Instead, agencies and organizations seem to act as interpreters or conveyors of "local knowledge." I argue that there is much to be lost in translation here. I seek to examine the consequences of aid agencies and organizations representing and speaking for "locals"- women in particular- rather than allowing them to speak for themselves. Lugones and Spelman also argue, if one does not define who one is, what one needs, and what one stands for, others will rely on stereotypes and existing labels in determining the needs and goals of a person or group. (1983)

Feminist conceptions of empowerment

"Women are considered not capable to give and have job opportunities as they are just good to be wives cooking, giving birth to children."[85]

While it is not possible to provide a comprehensive overview of feminist approaches to empowerment, it is useful to review some of the major themes and debates feminist scholars have linked to this concept. Feminist scholars have constructed a collection of definitions of empowerment that range from collective action, to choice (Schattsneider: Kabeer 1999), change (Harstock), capacity (Martha Nassbaum 2000), perception (Rowlands, 1995), and public action. Some of the major debates that surround feminist discussions of empowerment include the nature of power, the obstacles to emancipation, and the aspired goal of empowerment and emancipation.

For many theorists, one cannot understand "empowerment" without a concrete notion of "power;" however, there are nearly as many definitions of power as there are uses for the term. Power has been defined as ability (Dahl 1957), a transformative characteristic of action, (Wodak 1996; 1999), the ability to act in concert (Arendt), and post-structural (Holmes). V. Spike Peterson and Anne Runyan define empowerment as an *enabling power* and an alternative to "power over" approaches to organizing world politics or solving international problems. (1999) Some, like Dworkin and Daly have a definitive idea of empowerment and liberation. They see a unifying essence to women that should be developed into a female counter culture. (Steady 2006, 6) Patricia Hill Collins concluded that empowerment comes as the result of changed consciousness, internal transformation and transformation of broader community. (Hill Collins 1991)

[85] Personal interview. Interviewee #34 speaking about women's power in Sierra Leone.

For Lerner the goal of emancipation is a situation in which no obstacles remain. She admits that different feminists define obstacles differently; however, references to "freedom from" and self determination seem to dominate much of the literature which imagines and theorizes empowerment and emancipation.

While different groups of feminists have theorized, valorized, and/or discounted the concept, its use in the development and aid world has largely been practical- with little reference, and seemingly little insight into the broader theoretical implications of the concept. (Parpart et a. 2002) At the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in 1995 in Beijing, it appeared that feminists and international and development actors had united when it was declared that the Platform for Action was an agenda for women's empowerment. The Beijing conference was seen as a major breakthrough in recognizing the significance of gender issues for development. It was here that the World Bank launched its analytical framework "Toward Gender Equality: The Role of Public Policy" and the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) launched the 1995 Human Development Report focusing on gender and the new Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). (Baden and Geotz 1997) It appeared as if feminist activism and criticism had finally impacted the giants of the development world. Despite the initial praise of the conference, there was soon a growing concern over the "NGOization" of the women's movement and the dilution of "gender" in technocratic discourse. Today, NGOs and other development actors continue to use the language of feminist activists and scholars, yet a review of the definitions of empowerment and its uses will demonstrate that the way it has been conceived by feminists and how it is used by NGOs and the developing and agency world is grossly disparate.

Participatory Theory

While choice, change, and action seem to dominate the theoretical work on empowerment, its use within NGO, aid agency and development policies and programs typically refers to productivity, *participation*, and economic opportunity. The focus on participation in empowerment approaches has resulted in slogans such as "development by the people for the people," or "bottom up" becoming associated with empowerment. In order to understand this relationship between participation and empowerment, it is important to trace the use of empowerment in development discourses to the participatory approaches that became popular in the late 1990s. These methods became increasingly popular in response to criticisms by marginalized groups that development had largely been a "top down" and centralized process. (Kumar Corbridge 2002)

Although there is historical evidence of participatory research in the development context reaching back to the early 1970s, it was made popular by Robert Chambers in the 1990s. Participatory Rural Appraisal, or PRA, is the methodology Chambers created, which advertises itself as promoting local empowerment and rural ownership of development initiatives.[86] Chambers' main argument was that development methodologies had their roots in Western approaches. He declared that there was a need to determine a methodology that could incorporate and include the ideas and values of "locals," particularly marginalized and disadvantaged, beneficiaries. He developed participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and lauded it as "a family of approaches and methods to enable local (rural and urban) people to express, enhance, share and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and act." (1994)

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[86] PRA is most associated with three articles published in *World Development* in 1994 and a monograph entitled *Whose Reality Counts?* in 1997- each are authored by Robert Chambers.

From its beginnings, participatory research and planning developed into a broad method for studying and implementing development based on the belief that, through individual, grassroots participation, citizens could transform bureaucratic planning systems of development and take control over their own development process. (Mose 2001) Notions of the community have been central to participatory development policies. The community, presented as natural and self evident, is deemed to be able to excel and develop with sufficient individual mobilization and motivation. (Cleaver 2001) The stated objectives of participatory approaches appeared to appropriately address concerns about the bureaucratic nature of development agencies. As a result, as Kapoor concluded, participation became "a kind of development with a clear conscience" because of its "association with seemingly incontestable maxims" such as community, empowerment, local, and inclusion. (Kapoor 2005, 1206)

Development actors incorporated participatory approaches with astonishing vigour and the methodology quickly dominated development approaches in the 1990s. As Ilan Kapoor noted, "in one form or another, participatory approaches have become development's 'new orthodoxy,' so much so that you would be hard-pressed to find any NGO, donor agency or development institution that has not integrated it into programming." (Kapoor 2005, 1203) Institutions such as the World Bank have used the language of participation to demonstrate their commitment to "bringing in" marginalized groups and inviting them to participate and benefit from opportunities. (Cornwall 2004, 78)

Empowerment and Participation

"There is no job decisions input for women, even the few [who are] working are being sexually abused."[87]

Participatory development and empowerment have become interdependent concepts.[88] Within participatory approaches, empowerment became defined as the process whereby the marginalized gain the ability to exercise their agency. (Cornwall 2004, 77) In addition, the community was identified as the location or site where empowerment occurs. More specifically, participating in the process of development became identified as a major source of empowerment for previously marginalized or excluded individuals. What is important to note about this conception of empowerment is that "local people" or the "grassroots" are identified as the focus of empowerment while development actors are described as required "facilitators" for this empowerment.

Although participatory approaches have come under serious scrutiny, and in some cases have been abandoned by development organizations, the conception of empowerment inspired by participatory approaches remains in use by most development actors declaring their desire to "empower" people. Due to the obvious linkages between "participatory" and "empowerment" approaches, a review of some of the major criticisms launched against participatory approaches is a useful starting point for a critical analysis of empowerment discourses.

The Fall of Participation?

Participatory approaches to development were subject to increasing criticism in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The central critiques can best be understood through the

[87] "Aisha," interviewee #12, speaking about what power means for her. Personal interview. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

[88] For example, the United Nations declared "development must be *by* people, not only *for* them. People must participate fully in the decisions and processes that shape their lives." (UN, 1995 b: 12) It is also stressed in the Human Development Report that empowerment is closely linked to participation.

theoretical framework outlined in Chapter One of this dissertation. I show participatory approaches to development to be forms of disciplinary techniques through three central arguments. First, these approaches involve the reinforcement and reinstitution of the superior position of power of the policy maker in relation to the development beneficiary. Second, these policies serve to construct particular subjected identities such as "local," and "community." Finally, the inclusion of disempowered or marginalized groups into mainstream projects and activities can be seen as a mechanism of silencing dissent or removing sources of resistance.

Uma Kothari is employed to illustrate the assertion that participatory approaches reinforce unequal power relations. Kothari gives a detailed critique of the micro and macro level assumed in participatory approaches.(2001) She argues that participatory approaches focus on the micro level of intervention at the expense of missing, or even instituting, wider macro-level sources of marginality and injustice. (2001, 14) Kothari also concludes that participatory methodologies frame the micro against the macro, "the local against the elite, and the powerless against the powerful," in turn, defining local individuals as powerless and marginal and reproducing the notion that power is centrally located. In effect, this contrast of the micro to the macro level identifies development actors as the source of empowerment and as a necessary part of any development activity. (2001, 14)

Giles Mohan has also noted that participatory work sets the "poor" up against "an unspecified 'elite' whose only defining feature is their 'non-poorness.'" (Mohan and Stokke 2000, 253) The effect of this dichotomy is that central powers, or major organizations and agencies, are seen as the vehicles through which "local knowledge"

can be heard; in turn, citizens can only become empowered through their participation in centrally directed programs. Mohan and Kothari, amongst others, have argued that there is a need to reconsider who is determined to be "powerless" and to move beyond the notion that the "poor" need to be empowered according to the agenda of development.

The logic of participation assumes that development agencies and organizations are "'closest' to those most in need" and are the only actors capable of "decoding," "interpreting" and translating local knowledge into policy. (Mohan and Stokke 2000, 254) The result is that the role of NGOs and development agencies and organizations is solidified within this new "local" development scheme. The community is valorized and placed at the center of development; however the true potential of the community cannot be realized without a facilitator. Kapoor compares this notion of the development facilitator to a Christian Evangelical priest: "the facilitator presides, privilege and power are purged, and the community is reborn." (2005, 1207)

The second major critique of participatory approaches relates to their tendency to construct narrow identities. Constructions of "local" and "indigenous" by development actors should be seen in light of Lene Hansen's and Jacqueline Stevens' assertions that policies serve to construct identities at the same time as they construct policies to respond to these subjects. For example, "the local" is defined by participatory approaches in reference to development actors' own interpretations of "local" or "indigenous" knowledge. Development actors claim that their projects can effectively assess this knowledge and that they have an understanding of "the local." Critics have argued that rather than understand and represent "the local," development

actors have defined and constructed this identity based on their own biases and project objectives. (Kapoor 2005; Mohan and Stokke 2000)

More generally, critics have argued that it is naive and paternalistic to assume that development actors can *know* and speak for their subjects. For example, researchers such as Mose (1994) and Richards (1995) argue that most forms of knowledge are non-linguistic and tacit; however, Western models of knowledge are determined and restricted by language. As a result, participatory research will always be biased because only "locals" who can engage in, or have access to the media used by researchers will be included. Similarly, David Mose has found that beneficiaries of programs tend to shape their answers to researchers according to what they believe agencies or organizations will be able to provide for them. (Mose 2001, 20-21) Mose also concludes that agencies are more likely to seek out and include "local knowledge" that confirms their policy goals.

There have also been numerous questions raised in relation to conceptions of the community as harmonious and a site of consensus in participatory discourses. With a constructed image of a unified community, development policies are legitimized as being representative and inclusive. However, this image of the community often says more about development objectives in the area than it does about "the community." Essentially, participatory practices work to normalize certain practices and construct images of responsible citizenship and, in effect, govern the behaviour of beneficiaries. Kapoor concludes that the impact of this construction of the community in the name of inclusion and representation is that "the 'common good' becomes the expression of hegemonic privilege and subaltern loss." (Kapoor 2005, 1210)

A final important critique of participatory approaches comes from a radical reconsideration of inclusion and exclusion. Including the marginalized within dominant discourses of development and including discourses of resistance within hegemonic development discourses has actually diluted and "de-radicalized" potential sites of resistance. Cohen supports this assertion by arguing that the process of "bringing in" marginalized groups diminishes sites of conflict and resistance, and in effect, disempowers individuals: "those people who have the greatest reason to challenge and confront power relations and structures are brought, or even bought, through the promise of development assistance into the development process in ways that disempower them to challenge the prevailing hierarchies and inequalities in society, hence inclusionary control and the inducement of conformity." (2001, 143)

Rise of "Women's Empowerment?"

Despite the criticisms waged against participatory development, the logic associated with this approach continues to dominate development policies. Looking specifically at policies aimed at empowering women, it becomes clear that the definition of empowerment and the themes of "local," "indigenous" and "community" conceived by participatory approaches remain unaltered. In effect, even for those organizations and agencies that have abandoned participatory methods, the use of empowerment within development discourses, particularly in relation to women, upholds the same neoliberal and regulatory characteristics of these original methods. Although there may have been some discursive shifts by development actors, the original logic that disempowered subjects require an outside facilitator to enable individual participation and empowerment remains. This section will review how dominant development actors have focused on

women's empowerment as a key element of development. Second, the actors within the issue networks of development and women's empowerment will be discussed along with the various ways in which these actors define and use empowerment.

Development organizations and agencies have stressed not only that participation and empowerment are key to development but that *women's empowerment* is particularly vital to development.[89] Through my research I have found that three of the most common policies associated with women's empowerment include micro credit programs, programs aimed at political participation, and programs focusing on reproductive health. Although an in depth review of each of these policies cannot be provided here, a brief overview reveals how such policies fail to challenge, and in some cases serve to reinforce, existing patriarchal structures. These policies also exhibit the consistencies between empowerment and participatory approaches, including a focus on "community," "local," "bottom-up" and "indigenous." Moreover, a review of these policies demonstrates the ways in which they reinforce explicit neoliberal messages about the family, individualism and responsibility.

The central motivation behind micro credit programs and schemes was to link women with the formal banking sector in order to empower women with the ability to control a small business. (Von Bülow *et al*, 1995). The bureaucratic problems, and administrative costs associated with more formal loans and business operations are said to be avoided through the micro credit model. Micro credit programs have been lauded

[89] The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Agenda 21 mentions women's advancement and empowerment in decision-making as fundamental for sustainable development (quoted in Wee and Heyzer, 1995: 7). Similarly, the Copenhagen Declaration of the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) declared that the empowerment of people, particularly women, is a main objective of development. Also, the report from the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women called its Platform for Action "an agenda for women's empowerment." (United Nations 1995a).

as empowering women by "increasing their range of economic options, which include but are not limited to self-employment." (Servon 2005) There are a few logical assumptions associated with these programs. First is the idea that micro-credit programs give women control of their own development. Second, micro-credit programs are seen as a practical, grassroots alternative to bureaucratic development projects. As a result of this logic, micro credit programs are seen as prime examples of "bottom up" empowerment initiatives.

Due to the success of these initiatives in various areas of the world, the structure of the programs has not been widely scrutinized; however, there is growing evidence that micro credit programs directed at women do not challenge patriarchal power relations. In Bangladesh, for example, it was found that most loans to women were controlled by male relatives. (Goetz and Gupta, 1996). This same study found that women's participation in micro credit programs can have negative impacts because they require additional labour and time from women without alleviating their labour in the home. (Goetz and Gupta, 1996) As will be discussed later, micro credit programs in Sierra Leone explicitly assumed that the income would be used to supplement the family, not to "empower" individual women.

The neoliberal messages of these programs also provide an important foundation for criticism. Micro-credit programs offload the responsibility of development onto individuals. If the women in this program cannot meet their daily financial, health or other needs there is no institution or structure to which they can appeal. In turn, being awarded responsibility for one's development might mean that one is blamed for one's apparent lack of development.

A great deal of the programs and initiatives aimed at empowering women in a development context have focused on political participation. These types of programs often claim to "raise awareness" or "raise consciousness" as well as encourage women to participate in formal politics. Actual methods of political empowerment have included education and encouraging networks and linkages between women's organizations, government, and NGOs and aid agencies. (Byrne *et al*, 1996). It remains unclear whether raising awareness, advocacy, and these linkages translate into positive change and empowerment for women. In fact, these types of programs might be seen as an attempt to incorporate dissident voices into mainstream policy activity without actually responding to the needs of excluded groups. Morena Herrera, for example, has argued that there is a need to "feminise" the power spaces so that women are not simply added to patriarchal structures. (Herrera, quoted in Reardon, 1995) In Sierra Leone, although there has been an increase in women's organizations, many of these have been "ghettoized" or held at arms length from the state and other political power structures.

Women's health has been another focus of empowerment initiatives. The central logic behind these initiatives tends to be that programs that raise awareness about sexual reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and birth control emphasize women's self-worth and value and give them power over their bodies. Researchers have tried to demonstrate the link between "powerlessness" and ill-health. (Wallerstein 1993) In addition, the Women's Declaration on Population Policies, and DAWN's Population Policies and Reproductive Rights Project have highlighted the links between women's empowerment and control over sexuality and fertility (Garcia Moreno and Claro, 1994).

I argue that empowerment approaches focusing on health- particularly reproductive health- are more concerned with sexual regulation and the construction of the family than women's empowerment. Although advocacy relating to sexually transmitted diseases and birth control is important, the implicit messages assumed in some advocacy initiatives or projects are alarming. For example, some HIV/AIDS campaigns have been criticized for focusing on sex outside of marriage. The message that sex outside of marriage is dangerous while sex within marriage is protected reinforces stereotypes associated with the nuclear family model by characterizing marital sex as sacred.

Empowerment Issue Networks

Through a review of selected international organization and agency approaches to women's empowerment, I will reveal some of the congruent themes as well as the gaps that exist between varying definitions and the theoretical approaches to empowerment and the way it is employed in policy discourses. I use issue crawler technology to locate empowerment actors. At issuecrawler.org members input URLs, or website addresses and the issue crawler searches, or "crawls" through the internet to determine what sites are linked to these starting sites. A network map is produced, which indicates the "hub" site, or the site that is most linked to other sites in the network. Through arrows, these maps also indicate if sites are mutually linked or if sites are uni-directionally linked. In effect, this map is a visual image of an "issue network" on the web.

A simple method of initiating research on an issue network is to conduct a google[90] search using whatever phrase, topic, or terms define the issue. Then, the top sites listed by google are used to start the crawl at issuecrawler.org. The logic here is that the top sites offered by google should be the most frequent users of the terms, or the most popular and relevant sites related to your search terms. Although there are challenges, such as advertisements and questions as to how google determines its rankings, google is relevant because it is the most widely used search engine. For this chapter I initiated 3 different crawls to determine 3 different issue networks. I wanted to determine what sites were using "empowerment" and how they used empowerment in relation to women, men, and development. As a result I searched "empowerment development," "empowerment women development," and "empowerment men development" and conducted issue crawls for each. The results reveal the main global actors who use "empowerment," as well as the various ways that these actors define and use empowerment.

"Development empowerment" network

The top six sites produced from the initial google search for "development empowerment" were:[91]

1. http://www.scn.org/cmp
2. http://easd.org.za
3. http://www.unfpa.org
4. http://www.mdeinc.org/
5. http://www.idrc.ca
6. http://www.iisd.org

The first site, scn.org, is called "the community empowerment website." It

[90] This is currently the most widely used internet search engine. It can be found at www.google.com.
[91] See Appendix #2 for this issue crawler map.

advertises itself as a "cafeteria-style" collection of training material to assist "you" (refers to development or community workers) in "helping low income communities…to overcome poverty." The website seems like a cookbook for community workers; they have access to various approaches and practices, with pictures, and can choose and print advice to fit their projects without getting bogged down by academic or "highly technical" information. In this site, empowerment is discussed in terms of *community strength* and *capacity* and is measured based on 16 indicators.[92]

The second site is EASD, or Empowerment for African Sustainable Development, is based in Cape Town, South Africa. EASD is a private, non-profit organization focusing on "sustainable development in Africa and globally by providing information, capacity building, knowledge management, environment, development and poverty alleviation strategy services." Its services include poverty alleviation, capacity building, environmental assessment, knowledge management, and models for sustainable development. Other than its name, empowerment is not specifically used or defined by EASD. Upon conducting a search of "empowerment" within its site, only one document was shown- a report on women and poverty.

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[92] These indicators include: altruism (individuals willingness to sacrifice benefits to themselves for benefits to the community); values (the degree to which community members share values); service (individual access to services such as roads, water, education and health); communications (technology and mutually understandable language, literacy); confidence (belief that the community can "achieve whatever it wishes to"); context (this is unclear but defined as when community leaders "take an enabling approach to the community acting on a self-help basis"); information (reference to awareness raising); leadership (one that takes an enabling and facilitating role); networking (community members awareness of agencies, persons, or organizations that can provide resources); organization (degree that community members feel useful in the community); political power (the ability to participate in decision making); skills (technical, management and other skills to contribute to the organization of the community); trust (degree that members trust and can depend on each other); unity (sense of belonging); wealth (control over actual and potential resources).

The fourth site, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), defines women's economic empowerment as a sub-category of gender equality. UNFPA offers four distinct approaches to empowering women, including economic empowerment, educational empowerment, political empowerment, and the lifecycle approach. Programs primarily include "providing women with economic opportunities" through micro credit programs such as those offered in Bangladesh, Chad, Kenya, Morocco, and Palestinian women's centres. Educational empowerment is seen as a priority because education is declared to be one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty. In addition UNFPA concludes "girls who have been educated are likely to marry later and have smaller and healthier families." UNFPA approaches political empowerment through advocating for changes to existing laws and institutions that discriminate against women such as labour laws and laws relating to sexual violence. Finally, within the lifecycle approach offered by UNFPA, it is claimed that there are "critical messages" that must be conveyed to men and women at different stages in their lives. For example, young girls need to be informed about the benefits of delaying pregnancy, adolescent boys must be motivated to "show respect and responsibility in sexual behaviour," and adult women should know their reproductive rights.

The fifth website in the "empowerment development" search is Minority Development & Empowerment Inc. This site focuses on providing resources to the Haitian community in a particular Florida county. Although this organization is narrow in focus, it is interesting to note that they do not provide a definition of empowerment but use it in the context of *providing services and fostering leadership*. The sixth site, the International Development Research Center, is a Canadian Crown Corporation

created by the Parliament of Canada to foster research on ways to improve the social, economic, and environmental problems developing regions face. Within their site, most of the references to "empowerment" relate to community empowerment or women's empowerment,[93] however a definition of empowerment was not offered.

The final site, the International Institute for Sustainable Development IISD, is a policy research institute dedicated to "promoting change towards sustainable development." IISD is one of the only sites to offer an explicit and detailed definition of empowerment. They note that empowerment has been loosely defined by others and conclude: "A possible useful definition understands that power is the ability to negotiate and influence outcomes in a particular environment. Empowerment is, therefore, the process of gaining such an ability to influence outcomes and has political, socio-economic, gender and knowledge implications."

What is interesting from the issue crawler map that was produced as a result of these six starting points is that the "hub," or the site that most links these sites and their linked sites, is the United Nations Environment Fund. Because the crawl merely determines what sites are connected to the starting sites, and then what sites are connected to those sites, there are several sites that seem out of place such as ramsar.org- the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in Iran. Despite these exceptions, the map gives an accurate visual of the major international actors who are "talking about" empowerment in a development context.

This map also shows, through colour differentiation, government sites, organization sites and international sites. The other major players in this network are the

[93] Projects included "Community Empowerment Through the Use of Information and Communication Technologies," and "Contributing to Women's Health and Empowerment in India."

United Nations, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Fund. It is evident from the map that the only government actors in the "development empowerment" issue network are the Canadian Government (Canada.gc.ca) and the United Kingdom (represented by their department for international development at dfid.gov.uk). From this map, one can see that although the six starting websites are represented in the issue network, they are not the most significant players. Instead, the "hubs" are the World Bank and the United Nations and its funds, including UNDP and UNICEF. Since these actors are the hub of this issue network, it seems valuable to investigate how they define empowerment.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has placed "gender" and "women's empowerment" at the forefront of its policy goals. UNDP has defined women's empowerment in relation to women's increased ability to make decisions, women's access to income generating activities, and the provision of skills and education to women. (www.undp.org) UNDP policies promoting women's empowerment have been among those which focus on individual participation, skills, and economic self-reliance.

Women's empowerment and gender equality are identified as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) "in their own right and central to all other development efforts." (UNDP 2005) In 1995 the UN summarized their belief in the relationship between development and women's empowerment: "investing in women's capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development." (UN, 1995b: iii) The UN's Human Development Index has also begun to measure women's

empowerment through the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) and the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI). The GDI takes into account countries with gender disparity in basic capabilities, including life expectancy, education, and income while the GEM calculates women's abilities to participate and make decisions through measuring their representation in the labour force, positions of political power, and their share of the national income. The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women also explicitly links empowerment to participation. (2005)

The World Bank offers a much more extensive and explicit account of what they mean when they use "empowerment." The World Bank dedicates an entire page on its site to empowerment;[94] here, empowerment is defined as "the process of increasing the *capacity* of individuals or groups to *make choices* and to transform those choices into desired *actions and outcomes*. Central to this process are actions that both build individual and collective assets, and *improve the efficiency and fairness* of the organizational and institutional contexts which govern the use of these assets. (my emphasis) The World Bank also issued an "Empowerment Sourcebook" in 2002 which defines empowerment as "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives." A third definition of empowerment is described by the World Bank as "the process of increasing the assets and capabilities of individuals or groups to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes." (2002) The Bank argues that there is no single institutional model for empowerment but lists four key elements of empowerment: access to information, inclusion and

[94]http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTEMPOWERMENT/0,,contentMDK:20245753~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:486411,00.html

participation, accountability, and local organizational capacity. Despite the array of definitions offered by the World Bank's websites, there are certainly similar themes in all discussions of empowerment. These themes include choice, capabilities/capacity, and individuals.

Women, development and empowerment network

The second issue crawl initiated exposes the online actors that most use "empowerment" along with "women" and "development." For this google search, the top six sites were:[95]

1. http://www.undp.org/women
2. www.un.org
3. http://wcd.nic.in
4. www.oecd.org
5. www.worldbank.org
6. www.idrc.ca

The first two sites are UN related sites- the United Nations Development Fund's site focusing on women and the United Nations' general home page respectively. The somewhat cryptic use of empowerment by the UN has already been noted, as has the World Bank and IDRC's perspective on empowerment. The third site, wcd.nic.in is the site for India's Ministry of Women and Child Development. This site mentions the Indian National Policy on Women's Empowerment which focuses on legal reform including reserved seats in political municipalities and the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The stated goal of the policy is "to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women."[96]

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[95] For visual depiction of the issue network see Appendix #3.

[96] Some of the specific objectives of the policy were listed as: encouraging economic development, attaining equal access to participation and decision making, providing equal access to health care,

The fourth site, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development uses empowerment in much of its publications related to development. Although no explicit definition of empowerment is offered, terms such as local, equality, effectiveness, self-help, capacity-building and decentralisation all seem to be key terms associated with empowerment for the OECD. In one context, the OECD refers to one of its programs as a model for the "pro-poor promotion of decentralisation by combining the empowerment of the poor with capacity-building at the level of local governments." (www.oecd.org) In a report entitled "Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment," empowerment is used 69 times- almost always alongside gender quality. The OECD claims "investment in gender equity and women's empowerment is vital for improving economic political and social conditions in developing countries within the framework of sustainable development" and that "a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment is a means to enhance the total effectiveness of aid." (www.oecd.org)

The fifth site is for the Foundation for Sustainable Development (FSD). FSD, an organization that supports "grassroots" development organizations in Latin America, East Africa and Asia, does not define empowerment on its site, nor is it used on their official website; however it does use familiar language in reference to empowerment including: grassroots, local, raising awareness, welfare, capacity, and community. FSD also identifies "women's issues" and microfinance and business development as two of their areas of interest.

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education and vocational skills, "changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women," and mainstreaming gender in development processes.

Men Development Empowerment Network

The final issue network included actors who use "empowerment men and development" together. Upon initiating a google search with these terms, the top 6 sites were almost identical to the "empowerment women development network:"[97]

1. http://www.undp.org/women
2. www.un.org
3. www.worldbank.org/gender
4. www.unfpa.org
5. http://www.fsdinternational.org
6. www.idrc.ca

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) site that was located from this search is the only site that was not located in the other 2 crawls. UNFPA has a particular site called "Enhancing Men's Roles and Responsibilities in Family Life,"[98] which advocates for increasing men's commitment to the family. They admit that the "traditional family" structure is a myth; however their discussion of the family betrays this claim. The UNFPA site claims "women's empowerment begins in the household with equality, autonomy and respect. Achieving equality between men and women in the family is the foundation on which empowerment in other areas is based." It goes on to detail how women are traditionally defined by motherhood but men's roles as fathers are "vague" and claims "men's commitment to their children is key to the quality of family life and the prospects of the next generation."

There are several interesting insights that can be drawn from this issue crawler data. First, the language used by these actors supports my assertion that development discourses act as disciplinary techniques. The messages and indicators offered by the majority of these actors are indicative of the neoliberal influences within development

[97] For a depiction of the issue network see Appendix #4.
[98] See http://www.unfpa.org/intercenter/role4men/enhancin.htm.

policy. For example, most "women's empowerment" initiatives focused on economic development or income generation. (EASD, UNFPA, OECD) Moreover, actors such as the World Bank and the OECD used terms more explicitly associated with neoliberal policies such as capacity building, choice, efficiency, capabilities, and self help.

Second, some of the messages offered by these websites act as subtle disciplinary techniques aimed at communicating "normal" social behaviours. Perhaps the most obvious site is the UNFPA with its "critical messages" to women and men at different stages of their lives. Each of these messages relates to sex and relationships and indirectly to the family unit. Moreover, their messages to men about the responsibility of men to the family are based on assumptions of "typical" heterosexual familial formations.

Third, it is evident that "empowerment and development" is largely used in relation to women. The first indicator is that the men's empowerment network is virtually the same as the women's empowerment network. Actors like EASD and the OECD do not define empowerment but link the term to "women's issues" or "women's poverty." From the UN's websites, it becomes evident that they use gender and empowerment primarily in relation to women. First, although un.org/gender and un.org/womenwatch are listed as two separate sites, when you enter the first site you are automatically directed to the womenwatch site, effectively equating "gender issues" to "women's issues." Similarly, on UN sites and UN publications, when empowerment is used in reference to gender, it almost always is used in reference to women's empowerment. The OECD also uses women's empowerment and gender equality in tandem. Equating gender with women's issues means that rather than development

actors critically thinking through gender as an analytical category and considering the ways in which their institutions and approaches might reinforce specific gender norms and stereotypes, gender becomes exclusively linked to "women." The result is that both gender and women remain at the periphery as a "special" sub-category of development issues.

These semantic slights related to gender, women's issues, and empowerment convey confusing messages and render each of these terms as "empty signifiers." Going back to Laclau and Mouffe's argument about discursive shifts and empty signifiers, I argue that the attempt to include "women's issues" into mainstream development initiatives has resulted in "empowerment" becoming a primary nodal term while both gender and empowerment have become empty signifiers. Therefore, the increased attention given to "women's empowerment" should not be seen as a radical shift in development policy resulting from advocacy. Rather, it is an example of another discursive dodge whereby development actors incorporate "women's issues" and relate "empowerment" initiatives to women without changing the neoliberal logic of development policies. In effect, the spaces to challenge current policies have been reduced because it appears, at least in terms of discourse, that both gender issues and women's issues are being addressed.

Reintegration and "Women's Empowerment" in Sierra Leonean

> Angie is a 16 year old former anti-government combatant. She fought against pro-government forces and took part in looting, burning civilians and public premises, and maiming civilians. Angie participated in the DDR and feels that the DDR program was poorly organized and did not distribute resources evenly to former combatants. She reported she was "grossly abused even by program officers" at reintegration facilities. She also noted, "we were treated as public nuisances and ridiculed." Angie feels the program ended far too

quickly to be of use for her. She considers her current situation to be far worse than before the conflict: "now I live with war stigma and trauma." Angie argues the situation for women in general has not improved: "in our community decision making is not an active ingredient in the life of women....they are nothing but property...even the affluent struggle to take part in decision making."

Various stakeholders described the reintegration phase of the DDR as the process whereby soldiers were stripped of their power as soldiers and "empowered" as valued citizens of the post-conflict community. The way empowerment was used in reference to the reintegration process in Sierra Leone mirrors many of the ways it has been used by dominant development actors. In particular, reintegration programs focused mainly on economic productivity. For example, although USAID declared that it would help to empower citizens of Sierra Leone "in part by helping them build effective links among local councils, traditional, and national leaders, to broaden and strengthen the voice of the people," when referring to reintegration activities, USAID focused on "providing ex-combatants and war-affected youth with job skills and income-earning opportunities." (USAID 2001) USAID is also careful to mention the importance of "local" people: "USAID's democracy program in Sierra Leone equips local people, including women and youth, with the information and skills they need to participate in decision-making, tackle corruption, and contain human rights abuses with a view to end the cycle of violence and ensure security and stability." (USAID 2001)

There are certainly other key terms within reintegration programs and policies in Sierra Leone that demonstrate the influence of participatory methods and the dominance of neoliberal logic. Phrases and words like "bottom up," "grassroots," and "local knowledge" as well as "productivity," "efficiency" and "individual responsibility" are

rife within reintegration program documents in Sierra Leone. One theme of reintegration was described as "preparation of and support for former combatants in their socio-economic reinsertion and reintegration after leaving the demobilisation centres." (Escola de Cultura de Pau) The United Nations reported that through income generation activities, "youth dropouts and ex-combatants will be encouraged to participate in order to redirect their energies and talents to *productive* pursuits."(United Nations 2002, emphasis added)

Initial planning for reintegration programs seemed to have avoided "top down" bureaucratic development processes. For example, the Child Protection Committee of Sierra Leone published a paper in 1998 declaring that reintegration programs would "be adapted to *local economic realities* and realities and will follow as much as possible the individual interest and potential of concerned." (Child Protection Committee 1998, emphasis added) Reference was made in this report to the need to conduct a market assessment of the skills that were required and valued in local communities. In addition, it was concluded, "preference must be given to *traditional* occupations related to *local* markets and socio-economic reality. Projects must encourage using local skills and techniques based on *traditional* and *customary knowledge* that maybe be improved with external support." (Child Protection Committee 1998, my emphasis)

Although Chapter Two reviews the DDR process in greater detail, it is important to reiterate that reintegration programs for former soldiers in Sierra Leone were generally focused on providing skills training for ex-combatants. Ex-combatants had several options. First, they could register for vocational training in one of the following skills: carpentry, metal works, auto mechanics, tailoring, gara tie and dye, soap making,

hair dressing, plumbing and masonry, electrical works, computer skills, or building material production and basic construction technology. Second, ex-combatants- particularly those who had little or no education- had the option of apprenticeship programs in similar areas. There were also public works and jobs placement programs designed to train ex-combatants in road maintenance and construction.

Finally, there were special programs for groups of ex-combatants deemed particularly vulnerable, namely child ex-combatants, disabled ex-combatants, and female ex-combatants. Programs for female ex-combatants were described by the NCDDR as "family stabilization measures" and primarily featured micro-credit initiatives. The stated objective of these programs was "to provide financial support to ex-combatant families…in order to reduce family pressures on male ex-combatants." (NCDDR 2000) It is my assessment that reintegration programs did not empower female ex-combatants. First, these programs offered limited training options for women that were highly gendered and largely non-lucrative. Sullay Sesay, a coordinator for the DDR admitted that although a market assessment would have been useful in determining more appropriate and lucrative skills for women, this was never conducted: "At some point we thought we should have done a market survey of some of those trades we had chosen….Then we realized that after training the opportunities for income generation were too few." (Sesay 2005)

The lack of market assessment meant that trades were chosen for females based on gendered ideas of what women should do in the marketplace rather than an assessment of trades that would allow women to make money and succeed in the marketplace. The small number of trades also meant that there was an overabundance of

women trained in specific areas; thereby diluting the worth of their trade. Small communities like Makeni, in central Sierra Leone, for example, might graduate 100 females from skills training in gara tie dying. If even half of them want to remain in the community they will be competing with 50 other women trained in the exact same skill. One might ask, how many gara tie dyers does a small community really need? Without skills training that has value in communities, former female soldiers will be forced to find alternatives for survival. In impoverished and war torn communities, these options are limited. As Edward Anague concluded, female ex-combatants, like male ex-combatants needed to know that they have a future in a particular skill, otherwise they will "turn their backs" to something more lucrative such as prostitution.(Anague 2005)

Isatu was a child soldier who "was adopted and later on forcefully conscripted as a child soldier by the AFRC." She also described her soldiering experience as a time of manipulation and coercion: "we were used as everything for them to have and be everything they want in their war and political ambitions." She admitted that she heard positive things about the DDR: "the program pointed to, in some way, that something wonderful will be soon given to us." She was impressed by the large amount of international support and the relative stability at the DDR facilities; however, she reported that "the flamboyant promises [of the DDR] were not fulfilled." She went on to describe the DDR as wrought with empty promises and merely a mechanism for "fund raising." She wondered why reintegration programs did not help women whose children had died or who were raising children born of rape. She reported that she was better off before the program because then she at least had food and basic life necessities, and was not stigmatized: "my situation did become worse for me alone but also worse for my parents." In terms of women's situation in the country in general, Isatu wondered "does Sierra Leone have space for women to contribute?"

Second, micro-credit initiatives for women were not designed to give women economic independence; rather, they assumed, and required a nuclear family structure. Micro-credit programs, although highly lauded in many development contexts,

represented the "return to normal" for women in Sierra Leone in a very specific way. These programs were initiated for specific groups of people: wives of ex-combatants undergoing formal education or vocational training; female ex-combatants; wives of ex-combatants still waiting to get NCDDR reintegration assistance; the disabled; the elderly; wives of ex-combatants who have gone through trade testing and driving. (NCDDR 2000) The explicit goal of the micro credit program was declared in the following way: the micro credit scheme is meant to provide financial support to ex-combatants' families to start some petty trading in order to reduce family pressures on the male ex-combatants. (NCDDR 2000)

The way micro-credit programs were targeted for women was based on the assumptions that women will be married, that they wish to stay with their husbands, and that supporting their family is more important than attaining independence. In effect, micro-credit programs direct women to the nuclear family structure, and define their role as supporting the male breadwinner. This program is exemplary of the 'return to normal' associated with reintegration. Normal, in this case, refers to the re-alignment of the nuclear family and the replacement of women into their proper positions as support for their husbands. As Valerie Nicol has noted, in post-conflict Sierra Leone female ex-combatants are "relegated to [their] inferior position behind the man and the kitchen sink or pump, despite the active role [they] may have played during conflict." (Nicol 2001, 59)

As a member of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Kadie took part in the amputation of civilians, looting and burning property, and was subjected to multiple sexual abuses. Although she went through the DDR process in Sierra Leone, Kadie complained that the program "ended too quickly" and did not provide her with the skills or the resources that were initially promised. She recounted how pro-

government forces were given priority while anti-government forces were discriminated within the DDR process. She admitted that she knew little about the process in general and felt that most of the information about the process was not successfully made public. She called the program "a lie" and felt that program resources had been "directed to particular political groups." She described her current situation as "frustrating" because she felt she was "economically and socially poor" and faced public stigma and ridicule as a result of her soldier status. She described women's situation in Sierra Leone generally as desperately unequal. She reported that women are "treated with gross exclusion in decision making" and in "all aspects" of development. Kadie recommended that the program should have included education for women soldiers.

Out of the two sets of interviews I conducted, the first 50 women were part of a UNICEF program directed towards female abductees who had not benefited from the DDR process. As a result, 45 of these 50 women had not participated in the DDR. Twenty-one of the 50 women I interviewed did not even know enough about the initial DDR program to comment on whether or not they believed the program would have benefited them. Those who knew about the program were split in their conception of the benefits of the program. One woman, for example recounted how a friend of hers had participated in the program and seemed to be doing well.[99] Another woman reported that she did not think women were supposed to participate at all because "we are supposed to be peaceful."[100] Several women mentioned that the initial reintegration process should have offered education to women and one woman concluded that the benefits from the reintegration process were not significant enough.[101]

In the other group of interviewees, 7 of the 25 women had participated in the initial DDR process. When these women were asked if the program met their needs,

[99] Personal Interview, Interviewee #44. Freetown, Sierra Leone 11 December 2005.
[100] Personal Interview with Interviewee #62. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[101] Personal Interview with Interviewee #51. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

some of their responses included: "not me at all;"[102] "no it just added salt into injuries:"[103] and "I was grossly disappointed the way I was treated and the premature and abrupt way the program was ended."[104] These women had much to say about the weaknesses of the reintegration portion of the DDR. Several women were convinced that reintegration funds were directed "to families of program officials."[105] Others mentioned corruption, misdirection and mismanagement of funds as a weakness of the program.[106] One woman described the last phase of the DDR as "witch hunt reintegration" due to the stigmatization that resulted from being associated with the program.[107] Another respondent claimed that combatants were misinformed about the DDR process and, in some cases certain beneficiaries faced discrimination.[108]

When asked how to improve the disarmament and reintegration process for women, the respondents' suggestions included providing lucrative jobs, psychological support, more information and organization, and more local input into the process. Women consistently called for ongoing assistance with work as well as the desire for "not just a job- but a good job."[109] One woman referred to programs that trained women in tailoring and offered to buy them sewing machines. She explained that women "need a place to put these machines."[110] A common suggestion for improving programs was that education should have been provided for free and for all female soldiers.[111] One woman claimed that a "sense of belonging" is a significant need for reintegrating

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[102] Personal Interview with Interviewee #59. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[103] Personal Interview with Interviewee #70. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[104] Personal Interview with Interviewee #64. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[105] Personal Interview with Interviewee #51. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[106] Personal Interview with Interviewee #58. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[107] Personal Interview with Interviewee #66. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[108] Personal Interview with Interviewee #67. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[109] Personal Interview with Interviewee #2. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[110] Personal Interview with Interviewee #65. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[111] Personal Interview with Interviewees #9, 73, 49. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

soldiers while another argued that girls had to be given more priority in the future.[112] Many women described their current situation as desperate and, in most cases, worse than the wartime period. Zainab reported that, in Sierra Leone "women are considered not capable to give and have job opportunities as they are just good to be wives cooking and giving birth to children."[113] Another woman described how women in Sierra Leone are "meant to be seen not heard."[114]

> Fatima is a 16 year old girl who fought with the RUF during the civil war. In addition to her combat roles she also carried ammunition, cooked, and provided "sex service." When asked about her experiences during the war, Fatima reported sexual abuse, starvation, and family separation. Fatima participated in the DDR but did not feel the compensation given to former soldiers was sufficient: "The small amount of money I received when I surrendered my weapon could not keep me going." She also felt that ex-combatants were "misinformed" about the DDR and that DDR funds were embezzled by humanitarian staff. Fatima believes "a community mobilization approach with grass roots" would help to make reintegration for female soldiers. As for her current situation, Fatima reports that she is far worse off than her mother or grandmother: "[officials] do not talk about what women have to say…nor or there provisions for job opportunities for women. They are considered kitchen clerks and child bearers."

Return to normal?

"The propaganda in the program pointed in some way that something wonderful will soon be given to us."[115]

It is noted in Chapter Three that the post-war period has often been described as a time of opportunity and progress, particularly for previously marginalized groups such as women. Because women take up new roles and positions of power during conflict, it is argued that post-conflict is a time to renegotiate and reconfigure positions of power.

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[112] Personal Interview with Interviewee #49. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[113] Personal Interview with Interviewee #47. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[114] Personal Interview with Interviewee #73. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[115] Mary, speaking about her expectations for the DDR program. Personal Interview, Interviewee #38. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

(Handrahan 2004) However, it has been well documented that although women may acquire positions of power during war, and existing patriarchal structures may be destabilized, this shift is often short lived. (McKay 1998; Handrahan 2004) All too often post-conflict has meant a "return to normal" in the most regressive sense for women. As Lori Handrahan has noted, reconstruction and rehabilitation both refer to "going back" or restoring the pre-war order:

> when women are allowed or encouraged to participate, it is male leaders who are controlling and creating the conflict within which women are given a temporary' place. This 'temporary' place sis usually manifested in the form of revolutionary action and then rescinded during post-conflict consolidation and an attempt to 'return to normal.' (Handrahan 2004, 438)

Thus, for women, the "return to normal" often implies them giving up public political activity and roles and moving to the private, domestic sphere.

In Sierra Leone, this "return to normal" was rapid, devastating and facilitated by international development agencies and organizations. Catherine Zainab Tarawally, a human rights activist in Sierra Leone reported that women tended to be excluded from development initiatives and planning. (Bangura 2005) Despite the fact that the planners and initiators of the DDR and Sierra Leone advertised their intentions to include local knowledge and focus on indigenous values and trades, the direction for the reintegration process came almost entirely from "above." Namely, the main funding partners for the DDR- the World Bank and the United Nations- dictated what trades would be funded, the duration of the programs, and which soldiers were eligible. The World Bank and the United Nations, two organizations claiming to be "gender mainstreaming," inclusive, and concerned with "the local," dictated that women soldiers should be trained as gara tie dyers, seamstresses, caterers, soap makers, and weavers. This meant that even if

local organizations wanted to offer alternate options for skills training, they would not be eligible for funding from either of these organizations. "Local knowledge" about what skills were valued or needed was never really assessed or taken into account during the reintegration process in Sierra Leone. Instead, it was constrained and shaped by the biggest funding parties.

Conclusion

Empowerment discourses serve to discipline subjects according to specific neoliberal notions of progress and social order. Empowerment initiatives do not *respond* to obvious needs; rather, they *encourage* and *regulate* individuals to participate in and comply with established social and economic relationships. Donzelot described the "economy of the body" as policies and actions aimed at controlling and regulating social behaviour in order to optimize the labour capacity and reduce the need for government intervention.(1979) Similarly, empowerment initiatives- especially those aimed at women- convey explicit messages about the social and familial relationships that are "normal" at the same time as they offload responsibility for development from development actors to the individual.

Empowerment initiatives have incorporated the language used by marginalized groups to critique dominant development logic. Empowerment projects are advertised as "bottom-up" or "grassroots" approaches inclusive of "local" and "indigenous" knowledge. Despite the rhetoric, empowerment initiatives follow neoliberal logic and continue to justify and legitimize the role of the development actor. Put another way, empowerment projects offer no "exit strategy" for the empowerment actors. In fact,

their part as "facilitators" of empowerment establishes them as necessary transmitters of empowerment.

Empowerment actors have also solidified their roles in the development process through identity formation. Simply put, empowerment initiatives require a disempowered subject. Empowerment initiatives would not be justified if there were no disempowered beneficiaries. Women's empowerment programs, in particular, construct women as disempowered subjects requiring intervention. This construction should be seen as a reflection of development actors' own need to justify their existence and position of power than "the reality" of women's experiences and needs.

Development actors in Sierra Leone made little effort to understand the motivations and experiences of women and girls during the conflict. In turn, initiatives designed to address women and girls' needs and to "empower" them post-conflict are ill informed at best. There has been little investigation into the possibility that war was empowering for female soldiers. This is despite evidence that, in some cases, female soldiers had more access to resources, more social freedom, and more political power during the official war compared to the so-called pre and post-war context. This begs the question: If the motivation behind women's activity during war is wrongly conceived then how is it possible to meet their needs or empower them post-conflict?

The most disconcerting aspect of empowerment discourses is that they seem to offer hope and the possibility of change. For populations struggling after the formal cessation of war, the promise of "empowerment," choice, and progress are incredibly attractive. Despite the rhetoric, empowerment policies work within and reinstitute existing power relationships. These criticisms mirror current feminist critiques of the

neoliberal state. Placing the responsibility on individuals to succeed and progress within a patriarchal system has proved frustrating for women across the globe- to say the least. Empowerment programs offer women the prospect of progress and change, but then appointed them with the responsibility to achieve this within existing economic and social relationships. Moreover, women face the possibility of being held responsible for their own lack of empowerment if they do not succeed within existing empowerment initiatives. In turn, "the politics of hope has become the politics of despair." (Morgan quoted in Kelly 2000, 51)

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Chapter Five
Loving Your Enemy: Rape, Sex, Childbirth and Politics in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone

As I stood at the back of a classroom at a training centre for former female soldiers in Makeni, Sierra Leone, I was unable to stop myself from conducting mathematical equations in my head. Official statistics on wartime rape for the general population are conflicting and unreliable but statistics on women who were with the fighting forces- like these women who were learning to sew in front of me- are quite consistent. According to my own data, as well as other reports and estimations, 75% of female soldiers, and close to the same percentage of abductees, were raped during the conflict.[116](Amnesty International 2000) As I scanned over the swirled patterns of each braided head in the classroom this statistic came to hit me square in the stomach. The numbers associated with wartime rape are staggering; the reality that most of the women in a room with you have experienced rape is indescribable. Next to this classroom was a nursery where women attending the training centre could take their children while they attended class. Again, while looking at the bright laughing faces in their pink nursery uniforms I could not help but think of numbers and the probability that many of these children were conceived during rape. When Sara Ruddick wrote "[women's] maternal conception of the history of human flesh sets them at odds with militarist endeavours." (1989) I do not think she was trying to be ironic. Ruddick has written about the positive impact of motherhood on women and especially how it transforms their perspectives on ethics, care, and violence. Although Ruddick has

[116] As indicated later in this chapter, during my field research I had access to the intake forms of former child soldiers, abducted children and 'unaccompanied children.' In these forms, the data relating to girls between the ages of 3-18 indicates that 31 out of 42 girls (75%) were raped during the conflict. (Children Associated with the War 2005)

admitted that her perspective is a product of her position as a white, heterosexual, Western woman, the limits of this argument have perhaps been underestimated. In the setting of just two rooms- a classroom and a nursery- the mere idea of sex and childbirth as a natural and positive experience for women seemed beyond absurd. It is perhaps only by exploring women's knowledge of the history of human flesh and their roles within militaristic endeavours that the façade of traditional notions of natural, peaceful mothers might be exposed.

Charles Helwig poignantly wrote, "[women] know what war is about because war is part of any woman's daily experience. Daughters or sisters or wives, we know about 'loving your enemy' in a particularly direct and painful way." (Helwig in Kelly 2000, 52) This quotation begins to capture the intricacy of women's roles, relationships, and vulnerabilities during conflict. Moreover, through this quotation, one can begin to consider the assumptions associated with "love" and "enemy." In Sierra Leone, women indeed knew about loving their enemy. In many cases women were raped by a member of their family or community. Thus, a loved one became an enemy. After the official end of the war, a number of women were forced to marry their rape perpetrators rendering enemies "loved ones." Men and women who may have been part of enemy armed groups sometimes formed legitimate relationships, or, fell in love. Women who were raped by enemies were expected to love the children who were conceived as a result. Foreign troops and peacekeepers who arrived to protect civilians from "the enemy" also raped both civilians and combatants. In turn, this simple biblical quotation acts as a lens through which it becomes possible to see how sex, love, the family, and childbirth are intimately implicated in warfare. This quotation also acts as a starting

point for this chapter, which aims to examine and rethink both the idea of women as natural mothers and the assumption that sex and childbirth are private- particularly in the context of war.

Rape as a tactic of war in Sierra Leone and children born as a result of rape are two issues that have largely been relegated to the margins of conflict, development, and security studies as a result of prioritizing "immediate" and "hard" security issues over "everyday politics" and as a result of naming sexual assault and childbirth as "private" concerns. In turn, a second generation of war affected children who have been born as products of these rapes have been virtually ignored despite the fact that both these groups face serious security concerns, marginalisation, poverty, and stigmatization.

Overview and Framework

This chapter builds on the work of feminist theorists who have pointed out that war is one of the most glaring examples of women's exclusion from public, or so-called masculine areas of policy. I agree that with Carolyn Nordstrom that "what we hear and do not hear about the world we occupy is no accident…spheres where knowledge has been kept from public awareness are undeniably political." (Nordstrom 1998, 81) I argue that mainstream narratives recounting the transition from war to peace mute the experience of women both during war and in the so-called post-conflict era. These narratives tend to focus on violent men being disarmed so that society can "return to normal," or return from anarchy to "domesticated" order. The chaos and lawlessness that characterized the war period is described as gradually being replaced with peace and structure with the help of development agencies and government intervention.

Families reunite, children return to school, and men find new jobs to support their loved ones.

This dominant narrative leaves out the hundreds of thousands of women and girls who were raped in Sierra Leone and the children that were born as a result. Where are their stories? What types of family units are they a part of? What are their vulnerabilities "post"-conflict? I am especially curious about how post-conflict policy constructs women as peaceful, natural mothers despite the fact that their experiences during the conflict and their desires post-conflict often stand in stark contrast to this construction. In this chapter, I seek to represent five particular areas of silence relating to women's lives in post-conflict Sierra Leone, including: the artifice of the "natural" liberal family model in legal and development discourses, rape as a strategy of war, stigma as a product of policy making, children born of rape, and, the politics of prioritization for aid agencies and NGOs working in development.

First, I reveal how the liberal model of the family has been promoted by remnant British colonial law in Sierra Leone as well as the policies of development agencies operating in the post-conflict environment. I argue that current development policies serve to discipline subjects into conforming to the liberal family model. Drawing on the work of Jacqueline Stevens and Jacques Donzelot, I look at the motivations behind defining the natural family unit as a married heterosexual couple with children in Sierra Leone despite the variety of relationships that defy this model as "the norm." As indicated in Chapter One, these theorists are interested in the depiction of particular subjects and social formations as "natural." Within this chapter I look at programs and policies that support the notion of women as peaceful and innate nurturers who

naturally care for children. I attempt to deconstruct dichotomies associated with mothers and war- such as courageous warriors and peaceful nurturing women. I disagree with theorists such as Molyneaux who have argued that women's interests can be characterized as "practical, involving struggle to fulfill their roles as wives and mothers." (Steady 2006, 6)

Second, I establish the extent of the use of rape as a tactic of war in Sierra Leone.[117] I contest literature that frames war rape as random, sporadic, and arbitrary. Instead, I present wartime rape as strategic, pervasive, and inclusive. This section builds on Anthias and Yuval-Davis' work (Yuval-Davis 1989), which presents women as guardians of "the race." I argue that, just as guns are used as weapons, rape is used as a political weapon of war. Although rape should never be employed- during conflict or otherwise- just as combatants are required to disarm post-conflict, so to should disarmament programs be expected to recognize wartime sexual behaviour. Currently, addressing wartime sexual conduct is not readily identified as integral to restoring peace.

Third, I argue that stigmas associated with wartime rape and children born as a result of rape[118] are a result of policies and legal structures that designate the liberal family model as the norm, in comparison to *aberrations*. Women are shamed for being

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[117] This chapter is concerned with rapes perpetrated against women and girls; however, it must be acknowledged that men and boys were also victims of rape. I hope that my focus on women and girls does not contribute to the oversimplification of the portrayal of sexual violence in Sierra Leone. Rape was not simply perpetrated by male soldiers against females. In some cases female soldiers or commanders commanded rapes. Boys were forced to rape family members, and fathers were forced to perpetrate or watch the rape of their children.

[118] Although I use the term "children born as a result of wartime rape" to refer to this specific category of children whose paternity is known to be linked to rape, I also use the term "children born of war" to refer to a larger population of children that may face similar stigmas and vulnerabilities to children produced during rape. Similar to R. Charli Carpenter, one of the only other scholars writing on the issue of sexual violence and children born as a result, I argue that terms such as war babies or rape babies are both negative and feed the tendency to sensationalize their identity.

raped during war because their experience stands in contrast to the norm of heterosexual sex within the marriage unit. Forced sex during war or peacetime between married couples is invisible while forced rape outside the bounds of marriage is visible, deviant, and "abnormal"- regardless of its pervasiveness. Here, Hansen's discussion of linking and differentiation within policy discourses is useful. In this case, "acceptable" or authorized sex is linked to marriage, normal, and private and differentiated from sex that is unauthorized, illegitimate, public, and abnormal.

Fourth, I present what is known about children born of war in Sierra Leone. Through existing research as well as my own statistics, I seek to establish children born of rape as a significant population requiring specific resources and attention. I critique programs that both advise women to accept their children and encourage men to attain skills training and seek work in lucrative communities. These policies imply that the obligations of women post-conflict are to raise children and rebuild the private sphere while the obligations of men post-conflict are to find jobs and rebuild the public sphere. Drawing on Donzelot and Stevens' work on the family as well as feminist critiques of the notion of "natural" mothers, I complicate the alleged instinctual bonds between mother, child, and the father. I also rely on Lene Hansen's work related to identity formation in my examination of the consequences for women who do not fulfill the definition of "woman as emotional, motherly, reliant, and simple." (Hansen 2006, 19)

Finally, I uncover aid agencies' inability to name and categorize children born of war within their existing classifications of vulnerable children (child soldiers, abandoned children, and street children). I argue that not identifying children born of rape as a particular category of vulnerable children in Sierra Leone is a political choice

that stems from the misconception that sex and the family are not political or security issues. Referring back to Duffield and the Copenhagen School, I argue that the growing conflation of security policies and development policies has meant that issues such as rape and childbirth get "prioritized out" of the majority of post-conflict development projects.

Methodology

Stevens and Hansen advocate for an investigation of the ways in which regulatory powers produce gendered subjects. As Stevens notes, "discourse is then the field where the regulatory norms of sex are observed." (Stevens 1998, 23) Given the objectives of my chapter, discourse analysis is the most useful methodological approach. I use feminist critical discourse analysis to frame my discussion of war rape and children born of war. I am principally concerned with Lazar's claim that "discourse [is] a site of struggle, where forces of social (re)production and contestation are played out." (Lazar 2007, 4) In this chapter I use an intertextual approach, which includes the analysis of program documents and policies, existing literature on war rape and children born of rape, first person interviews with 75 female soldiers, and interviews with NGO workers, aid staff, and government officials conducted in Sierra Leone in 2005. I argue that discourses associated with reintegration and reconciliation do not apply to women and that these processes primarily benefit men.

I structure my analysis on Hansen's assertion that "identity is always spatially, temporally, and ethically situated." (2006, 37) Using the family, the home, one's country or a community as examples of space, Hansen argues that "identity is relationally constituted and always involves the construction of boundaries and thereby

the delineation of space." (2006, 47) Hansen points out that policies often refer to concepts of time, including development, progress, and stasis. Finally, policies often have an ethical context and may construct ideal behaviours or subjects in contrast to deviant ones. An effective analysis of the discourses of war rape and children born of war rape must include an examination of the spatial, temporal, and ethical dimensions of the discourses. In this chapter I conclude that discourses identifying women as mothers bind them spatially both to the family unit and to the private realm. I also compare discourses that describe opportunity and progress for men post-conflict in comparison to discourses linking women to the unchanging model of the family. Finally, I look at discourses that frame rape as shameful in contrast to acceptable sexual relations within marriage.

Background: Sex and the Family in Sierra Leone

According to Jacqueline Stevens, "the familial nation is not obscure, metaphysical, or difficult to locate. The familial nation exists through practices and often legal documents that set out the kinship rules for political societies." (Stevens 1998, 108) Sierra Leone is no exception to this observation. The way that the family is envisioned in Sierra Leone is reflected through family laws and cultural norms and practices that regulate its citizens. As indicated in chapter two, most of Freetown's current official legal system is reminiscent of British influence during colonization. There are specific laws that regulate the family including those relating to marriage, divorce, adoption, and custody. As a result of the damage and chaos caused by the conflict, as well as the lack of resources and attention given to maintaining records, many of these laws are "scattered around" or have "gone out of print." (Shiaka, 2007)

This means, literally, that some copies of various legal documents cannot be located because the remaining paper copies of the documents are lost or have been destroyed. This confusing situation, combined with the fact that the majority of Sierra Leoneans live in the provinces, has meant that local practices, norms and rules primarily regulated the family during colonization, and continue to hold significant influence today.

Stevens views marriage customs and regulations as central to the reproduction of the state:

> Marriage reproduces the state in three ways: 'First, marriage provides the *legitimacy* that renders some children citizens and others aliens. Second, marriage is a *form* of kinship relations that defines the particularity of that state against others. Third, marriage is the benchmark of *full citizenship*. The juridical privileging of certain kinship structures marked by marriage- in tax law, health and welfare policy, educational policy and immigration law- continues to render the married couple as the ultimate unit worthy of the fullest political rights. (1998, 220)

There are three types of marriage ceremonies in Sierra Leone: "cultural marriages," "religious marriages," and "registry marriages." Cultural marriages involve traditional practices such as the breaking of a kola knot.[119] Religious marriages may take place at Christian churches or Mosques, and registry marriages are marriages that are legally registered with the government ministry in Freetown. Although all marriages are socially binding and recognized by the community, registered marriages are distinct for two main reasons. First, registered marriages are the only type of marriage certified by a government institution.[120] Second, registry marriages are the only type of marriage that

[119] A rope is tied around a kola fruit and the two parties pull either side of the rope to break the kola.
[120] It is important to note that Jacqueline Stevens is primarily concerned with recognized marriages, or legal marriages because of the relationship these create between the state and couples.

contradict traditional practices by legally assuring women access to her husband's property upon his death.[121]

Although most regulations associated with custody and adoption also stem from ethnic norms and customs, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs has increasingly tried to intervene in these areas. Dehungue Shiaka, from the Ministry of Social welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, explained that in cases of divorce, the Ministry investigates the parents to decide if the father is capable of caring for the child.[122] As I noted earlier, in most cases, they deem the mother to be the best possible parent for the child. (Shiaka 2005) It is assumed that the mother is "more naturally prepared to mother [sic] children" and that fathers are often too busy working to care for children. (Shiaka 2005) In these cases, if the father requests custody of a child after he/she reaches the age of 10, custody is usually granted to him. (Shiaka, 2007) The rationale for this shift from the mother to the father is that, after the age of 10, the child is better able to take care of himself/herself and that the father is more likely than the mother to have the financial resources to further the child's education and to provide him/her with various opportunities. (Shiaka, 2007)

One area of law that is currently under review in Sierra Leone relates to the practice of adoption. Traditionally in Sierra Leone, if a mother cannot raise her child or

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[121] Sierra Leone has 4 major ethno-cultural groups: Kriole, Shabu, Timne, and Mende. Of these 4 tribes, only the Shabu tribe is matrilineal. For the other 3 tribes, male children are prioritized and the oldest son inherits the wealth and property of a family. Also, if a woman's husband dies, it is typically her husband's brother (typically the oldest male brother from the same parentage as the husband) who will inherit the husband's wealth and property- unless the husband and wife have a male child who is considered an adult.

[122] The definitions of 'child' and 'adult' vary between ethnic groups and from region to region in Sierra Leone. For example, a former British act called "The Young People's Act" identified anyone over 16 as an adult; another law designates 14 as the threshold between childhood and adulthood. Traditionally, in some Chiefdoms both male and female children go through initiation ceremonies which can include female genital mutilation, training in local hunting procedures, and learning about the history of the tribe. These ceremonies dictate the transition from childhood to adulthood but can be performed at a variety of different ages depending on the physical development of the child and the financial resources of the family.

dies, the biological father's parents will raise the child. Children born during the conflict represent new challenges to this traditional practice. First, children may be born as a result of rape or gang rape. In this case the father may not be known, and there is no relationship or sense of obligation between the father and the child. Second, children may be born as a result of consensual sex during the conflict between an unmarried couple. In this case, the father's family may reject the child as a bastard because there had been no recognized marriage. Third, the location of the father and his family may not be known either as a result of the mass displacement of the population during the conflict (over 1 million people were displaced from their homes) or as a result of the high number of deaths during the conflict. After the war there was an increase in the number of women with children who were either unmarried, did not know the father, did not want to locate the father, or who had been rejected by the family of the father. However, there were no real legal or customary frameworks to address these situations. In response, after the official end of the war, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's affairs began creating "The Bastardy Act" (now called the adoption act) to attempt to legally address children born into the above mentioned circumstances.

Sierra Leone's laws, norms, and regulations associated with marriage and the family have been altered and challenged due to the presence of Western NGOs and aid agencies. For example, groups opposing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) have encouraged some ethnic groups to discontinue the practice; while other groups have taken the practice underground. More importantly, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs has lost most of its government funding and now relies almost completely on funding from UNICEF. The result has been that the policies and

practices of this ministry are largely dictated by UNICEF's priorities. Shiaka explains, "money isn't everything but…if you don't follow [UNICEF's] agenda then you don't get money for programs." (Shiaka, 2007) He also noted that any mention of home-grown initiatives or indigenous initiatives is "a grammatical façade…but when a program or policy fails, UNICEF says the government has failed, when it succeeds, UNICEF has succeeded." (Shiaka, 2007) Given the influence UNICEF has on one of the key government ministries in Sierra Leone that regulates marriage and the family, any critical examination of the "regulatory powers" that dictate policy in this area must focus on UNICEF and their implementing partners (which include both local and international organizations).

Just as Donzelot describes the significance of the family in the shift from charity to directed philanthropy; the family is at the heart of so-called new humanitarianism- or the increased focus of direct and conditional aid. I argue that the liberal family model is encouraged and instituted not in response to existing relationships in Sierra Leone, but because this model is the most economically efficient, and the easiest unit to govern and manage. Policies associated with the family appear to be enacted in the name of reconstruction, empowerment, representation and "normality;" however they are part of an overall reinforcement of hegemonic ideas associated with Western notions of progress and development.

ii. Rape During Sierra Leone's Civil Conflict

A leading Sierra Leonean psychiatrist Dr. Edward Namim stated "Sierra Leone has produced world records in terms of rape and other sex crimes, though statistics are largely inconsistent and incidents generally unrecorded."(Women and Global Human

Rights) The available statistics and information pertaining to war rape in Sierra Leone are overwhelming. Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) estimates that between 215,000 and 257,000 girls and women may have been affected by sexual violence in Sierra Leone.(2001)[123] In addition, it is estimated that between 70-90% of females abducted during the conflict were raped.(Amnesty International 2000) The majority of the incidents of sexual violence reported to PHR (68%) occurred between 1997 and 1999. Many of the available statistics offer data on selected groups of women including, abducted women, female soldiers, or refugees. This categorization makes it difficult to approximate the total number of women and girls who were raped in Sierra Leone. There is also some indication that, due to social stigma and pressure, rape was grossly underreported and the available data is skewed. My own research found that current statistics grossly underestimate the number of women and girls raped during the conflict. On one occasion, I had access to the child intake forms of former child soldiers, abducted children and unaccompanied children. In these forms, the data relating to girls between the ages of 3-18 indicates that 31 out of 42 girls (75%) were raped during the conflict.

Although mainly perpetrated by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), all factions of the fighting forces used rape as a tactic of war during the civil conflict in Sierra Leone. Women, men, boys and girls of all ages were raped; however, women, particularly young girls under seventeen- those thought to be virgins- were targeted. In many instances, girls and women were rounded up by rebels, brought to rebel camps and then subjected to individual and gang-rape. PHR reported, "in many cases the abductees were gang raped, beaten, starved, tortured, forced to walk long distances

[123] The total estimated population of Sierra Leone during the conflict was approximately 6 million.

carrying heavy loads, and told they would be killed if they tried to escape."(2002) A report by Mazurana and McKay, focusing on girls in military and paramilitary groups, paints a picture of systemic sexual violence against girls in particular. In their study, all respondents who reported their primary role as fighters also reported that they were forced to be "wives." (Mazurana and McKay, 2003)[124]

War Rape

Rape and violent sexual abuse of women in conflict has a long history.(Brownmiller 1975)[125] Anthias and Yuval-Davis have theorized that women are often viewed as guardians of "the race" in their attempt to explain the increase in sexual violence during conflicts. (Yuval-Davis 1989) Pettman also contends, "during war, bodies, boundaries, violence and power come together in devastating combination. Women's bodies become the site for signifying the domination of one group over another." (in El Bushra 2000, 95) For Pettman, "reconceptualising the relationship between sexual violence and the state reveals war rapes to be exercised in political power." (in El Bushra 2000, 95) These two approaches to war rape all seem to be trying to answer the question: what is it about sexual violence and rape that makes it such an effective tool of war? Anthias and Yuval-Davis assert that the perpetrators view their victims as a means to alter the purity of the race. Pettman sees bodies, rather than states, as a site of domination. Both approaches view rape as symbolic of the penetration of boundaries and borders. I argue that there is a need for theorization about wartime rape to move beyond the chronic tendency to link wartime rape to some discussion of the

[124] It is interesting to note that the term bush wife is often used interchangeably with sex slave. Rather than using terms like rape and gang rape, women often say that a man took her as his wife.
[125] Selected global examples include: an estimated 500,000 Korean victims of sexual abuse during the Japanese occupation; the reported rape of at least 5000 Kuwaiti by Iraqi soldiers; and the use of rape as a tool of genocide in Rwanda.

state, boundaries, territory and conquering. Rather than drawing the conclusion that rape is committed as an act of "violating borders" or "violating property," I think a more interesting question to ask is: What existing laws and social norms make possible the understanding of women as property, or as state territory?

Stevens' work informs an answer to this question. Stevens has argued that the institution of marriage guarantees men access to women's bodies and labour. Sex is granted to men within the institution of marriage (historically, rape has often been seen as an impossibility within the confines of marriage). Further, men gain access to the children their wives produce (some custody laws even grant husbands rights to children their wives produce with another man) through custody laws:

> the very definition of matrimony suggests the institution is constitutive of inequity in roles related to reproduction, that marriage is an asymmetrical system assuring men access to mothers (mater), creating unrecognized and largely unrequited demands on women. (1999, 210)

Through the state and the institution of marriage, men receive power over and access to the labour and bodies of women. This establishes women as property and territory and renders the act of rape both a violation of property and a desecration of the state. In effect, rape becomes a powerful strategy not only because it disrupts the power and property (territory and boundaries) that is given to males through the institution of marriage but also because it violates established norms relating to the family that are central to the logic of the state.

In fact, most of my research in Sierra Leone indicates that rape was an effective tool of war because it violated particular social norms, shamed individuals and their families, and defied established legal rules relating to marriage and the family. For example, in order to sever young soldiers' ties with their families, and to demonstrate

their loyalty to the armed group, some boys and young men were forced to rape their sisters, mothers, and even grandmothers. Fathers were made to watch while their daughters or wives were gang raped. Young girl virgins were targeted and raped. Mothers were raped in front of their children. Men and boys were raped by order of female commanders. Pregnant women were raped with objects to try to abort the fetus. It is the infliction of *shame* that renders rape a vanquishing strategy. Therefore, rather than asking, why has rape been an effective tool of war?, more interesting questions might include: what social norms are violated with the act of rape?; and how is it that rape becomes an act of shame for women and men *and the state*?

Along with Annick Wibbin, I argue that sexual violence during war should be seen on a continuum rather than as a specific, unique time period. Social norms that were established before Sierra Leone's war provided the context against which rape came to be understood as shameful. Norms surrounding the traditional liberal family dictate that marriage is the institution within which sexual relationships are authorized. A closer examination of war rape in Sierra Leone confirms that the social norms that were being violated mostly related to the family and the marriage unit. A son raping his sister or mother, the raping of pregnant women, and the targeting of virgins seemingly has more to do with the violation of the traditional family structure than it does with ideas of borders and conquering. In addition, women have been shamed for being raped during war because their experience stands in contrast to the established norm of sex within the marriage unit.

Seeing sexual relationships before and during the conflict on a continuum also exposes the family unit as a social construction. Stevens has noted that the family unit is

often presented as pre-political and natural; however, an examination of intimate relationships during the conflict in Sierra Leone reveals that only sanctioned marriage and children born from these marriages were recognized as legitimate units[126] while consensual relationships between men and women, as well as the children produced by them, were considered illegitimate. In fact, couples forced to marry one another after the conflict faced fewer stigmas and were able to "blend in" to communities with greater ease than other consensual yet non-married couples. The determining factor in relation to stigma and shame has nothing to do with love or the act of rape itself; rather, it has everything to do with recognized marriage.

Stigmatization and War Rape

In many countries, women who have been raped experience various forms of social stigma. In Sierra Leone, despite the widespread use of rape as a tactic of war, women who are victims of rape are still negatively labelled, blamed for the assault, and ostracized from their family and community. Stigma acts as a "double assault" for rape victims; not only must women endure the act of rape itself, they, and their children, can expect to endure further destitution. Hamidu Jalloh explains: "[a woman who has been raped] is a second victim- she suffered twice because of the shame and stigma." (Jalloh, 2005)

Stigma compels women to remain silent about rape and sexual assault. Jalloh explains, "Very few women will get up and say they are raped." (Jalloh 2005) Therefore, the only reliable statistics on rape in Sierra Leone come from organizations like Medicines Sans Frontiers or Physicians for Human Rights. There is no way of

[126] For further clarification on marriage laws and 'legitimate' children in Sierra Leone, please see Chapter Two.

knowing exactly how many women in Sierra Leone experienced rape but remained silent. In a study of sexual assault victims conducted by PHR, sixty-five percent of respondents said that they had reported incidents of sexual violence to another person and only 53% of women reported seeking assistance after an attack. (Physicians for Human Rights 2002) Shame and stigma were identified as the main reasons for not disclosing the event. Thus, for many women, the post-conflict reintegration process is largely characterized by secrecy and desperation rather than truth and reconciliation. As Susan Shelper notes, women must use "different 'scripts' about their reintegration secrecy." (Shelper 2002, 11)

> Esther was 17 years old when she was with an armed group. Before the war she was thinking of becoming a nurse but worries now because she does not have much formal education. She is optimistic that things will be better after the war since war is merely "men fighting for men." She has one three-year-old child who was born from a rebel. She does not know who or where the father is- or if he is alive. When asked what she will tell her child about the father, she explained she will tell her child he is dead.[127]

Despite attempts to keep the experience of rape a secret, some women and girls in Sierra Leone are labelled victims of rape based on their roles during the war, where they lived during the war, if they were abducted, and sometimes even if they are single mothers. Within communities that were particularly targeted and ravaged by rebel forces, almost every woman and girl may have been raped. A social worker explains the result: "There are young men in Freetown who say don't touch a woman from the eastern suburbs because they've all been had." (Radio Netherlands Worldwide 2000) Sullay Sesay, a Unit Manager for the Information and Sensitization department of the

[127] Personal Interview with Interviewee #68. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

DDR, described how girls who "went into the bush"- either by choice or by abduction- are ostracized in their communities:

> A family may shy away from another family because they know they went into the bush with the rebels. They may have not gone on their own accord but they are stigmatized anyway. When [girls] are in the bush they suffer a lot of moral deprivations. Gang sex and that kind of thing- they rape them. So if there are members of the family that went in the bush- especially girls- there is this line. 'Your daughter has gone into the bush- she should not be playing with our daughter, and that kind of thing. (Sesay 2005)

Another form of stigmatization faced by women in Sierra Leone comes from the fact that because rape was widely used as a tactic of war, sexual relationships during the conflict are often assumed to be coerced. (Baldi and MacKenzie 2007, 90) As a result, there may be a supposition that single, young mothers, or mothers who had children at a very young age, were victims of sexual violence. This is particularly true for women who admit to having a relationship with soldiers or rebels during the conflict. This assumption is contested by testimonies from interviewees who explained that it was not uncommon for women and men to fall in love during the conflict- even while fighting as soldiers together- and have legitimate, consensual relationships. Family members and the communities of women and men who formed a relationship during the war may deny the bond, and the children they bear, because the union was not authorized through recognized forms of marriage. Therefore, the institution of marriage has been a main factor in determining if women will face stigma after the conflict.

> Tryphena cannot remember how old she was when she was captured by an armed group. Tryphena was "living together" with a man who was captured with her by the same armed group. She stayed with the group for 6 months before escaping and finding her family. She knows at least 40 other women who fought with armed groups but did not go through the disarmament program. Tryphena has a one and a half year old child. Although technically her husband is identified as a rebel, she

sees him as her legitimate husband and plans to stay with him and raise her child with him.[128]

In addition to stigma from the larger community, many single mothers in Sierra Leone face obstacles such as poverty and rejection from their families. Of the 50 women interviewed in Sierra Leone, over half were single mothers. (Baldi and MacKenzie 2007, 90) Thirty percent admitted that the father of at least one of their children had left them and was not helping to care for their child. Only 23% of the fathers lived in the same town as the mothers and 19% of the fathers were dead. According to the women interviewed, the reasons why they were raising their children alone included: the large number of deaths that occurred during the war meant that many fathers were dead; some women were abandoned by the fathers and did not know where they were; the displacement of people that occurred during the war and during the DDR process often physically separated fathers from their children; and, women and girls who escaped from their military captors may have avoided the fathers of their children. (Baldi and MacKenzie 2007, 90)

Due to the vulnerable situation in which women and girls found themselves post-conflict, some married their rape perpetrators as a result of the prospect of shame and stigmatization. In certain cases, pressure was put on victims of rape to marry their perpetrators in order to avoid disgracing their families and communities. (National Forum for Human Rights 2001; Shelper 2002) Susan Shelper explained that several agencies working in Sierra Leone encouraged girls to marry their former commanders and captors. She reported: "marriage somehow solves the problem of reintegration for girls in a way unavailable to boys. No one would suggest that boys formalize their

[128] Personal Interview with Interviewee #13. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

relationship to their erstwhile captors." (2002, 13) Helwig encapsulates the bizarre links between marriage, sex, and violation: "The fact that women are often violated by someone they know…It starkly illustrates a profound difference in the structure of gender oppression compared to other structures of power; not only are women required to live alongside and respect their oppressors; they are expected to love and desire them." (Helwig in Kelly 2000, 52) Thus, instead of a process of healing and reconciliation, "post"-conflict has been a period of further cruelty and subjugation for women and girls.

> Kadiatu was with the rebels for one year. She admitted to killing and "holding weapons." At just 22 year of age, Kadiatu has three children, ages 11, 7, and three. This means her first child was born when she was just 11 years old. Kadiatu explained that the children were all born from a rebel; however, she was adamant that they were all fathered by the same man. Kadiatu admits that things are "strange" between her and her children and complained that she had no assistance in parenting. Although Kadiatu did not clarify where the father is- or if he is alive, she said she tells her children their father is dead.[129]

War Babies

Stevens argues that the family has never been a naturally occurring unit, but is always constituted through politics. She identifies the customs and laws associated with marriage and birth as "the paradigmatic decision rule for inclusion and exclusion into all political societies, including the modern state." (Stevens 1998, 16) In the context of larger debates on the naturalness of the family and the liberal tendencies of post-conflict programs, children born of rape are a fascinating case study. By examining the various stigmas attached to children born of rape, it becomes obvious that these children are considered exceptional, not necessarily because of the rape that produced them, but

[129] Personal Interview with Interviewee #11. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

because they were produced outside of the family unit (read: recognized heterosexual married couple). In this way, the claim that families are pre-political is revealed as a sham since the capacity for a family to "come into view" as legitimate is only through the political act of marriage recognized by the state.

Children born as a result of rape challenge the liberal model of the family because they reveal that not all children are considered natural extensions of the family unit. Although sex and childbirth are described as an integral part of the pre-political family, children born of wartime rape demonstrate how some children can become labelled "unnatural." Second, children born as a result of rape also call into question notions of "natural" roles for mothers and fathers. Stevens argues, "the meanings of the most apparently "cultural" or "natural" roles of mother and father still are constituted by and through the state." (Stevens 1998, 213) Post-conflict policies and programs such as the DDR seem to indicate that the obligations of women post-conflict are to raise children and rebuild the private sphere while the obligations of men post-conflict are to find jobs and rebuild the public sphere.

Referring back to Hansen's assertion that policies construct identities, in the context of post-conflict Sierra Leone, the subject of a caring, nurturing mother is juxtaposed to the industrious, adventurous and hard-working male. For children born during the conflict, their natural place is determined to be with the mother. Women who may have been with the fighting forces for 10 years and who may have never been parented herself or learned parenting skills are supposed to "naturally" possess the expertise required to mother a child. Thus, post-conflict policies that place the responsibility of child rearing on mothers demonstrate that women may not always

"naturally" take up the role of parenting; rather, the ideal of the natural mother is constructed through policies that put pressure on women to conform to this identity.

> Salamatu thinks she was 18 or 19 when she was with the fighting forces. She escaped but still does not know what the DDR process is. Salamatu has two children. The first, a four year old was fathered by a rebel. Salamatu did not give any other details other than "he is dead." Her second child, a one year old was fathered by her current husband. Salamatu explained that her husband "doesn't accept" her first child and has insisted the child be raised by Salamatu's mom.[130]

i. Statistics and Information about Children Born of Rape

Given the relative silence and inattention to the issue of children born of war, it is exceptionally difficult to confirm their numbers or to learn what happens to them after their birth. What we do know is that while sexual violence occurred throughout the 11-year civil conflict, the majority of rapes were committed between 1997 and 1999. (Baldi and MacKenzie 2007) From this it can be inferred that children born as a result of violence during the war may today be between the ages of 4 and 15, with a majority of the children in the age range of 6 and 9. PHR has also estimated that 9-10% of rapes that occurred during the conflict resulted in pregnancies. According to their statistics this means that more than 20,000 so called "war babies" were born. As was noted earlier, the rape statistics are extremely skewed in Sierra Leone; therefore, this assessment of the number of children born of war is a low approximation.

Child welfare experts in Sierra Leone could only speak generally about the number of children born of war. Augustan Turai of Ben Hirsh declared, "there are *many* within the community."(Turai 2005) Catherine Zainab Tarawally explained how some

[130] Personal Interview with Interviewee #61. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.

men may have produced 2 or 3 children during the conflict but "after the disarmament these men just go away and leave the children with the women." (Bangura 2005) A director of an orphanage said that the reason why his orphanage was created was due to the high number of abandoned babies. He estimated that about 20 of the 400 children that went through his facility during the conflict were abandoned babies he believed to be born out of rape or to women who had been abandoned by the child's father.(Mansaray 2005) The typical age range for these babies was between 6 months to just over one year old.(Mansaray 2005)

Most abandoned babies were fostered or stayed in orphanages because there was no way of tracing their biological families. Binue explained that due to lack of resources, there is no follow up for the children that are fostered. (2005) In a country wrought with poverty, this can result in children growing up in desperate circumstances. For example Reverend Hassan Mansaray of Children Integrated Services Sierra Leone reported:

> most of [the foster families] already had several children of their own- some 5 or 6- so when you place a child with them in the midst of poverty the problem is that the children are mostly used to work. Like 3 years ago one child was killed along the highway. They sent her to buy wood and she carried the wood on her head to her house and they would sell this wood and out of the profits they would feed the family. Some even send the children to the street to sell or to beg for additional income to augment the running of the families. There are few families that can afford the fees to send their children to school. (Mansaray 2005)

This testimony sheds light on what life is like "post"-conflict for children born of war. Far from a time of development and security, children born of war face multiple insecurities including poverty, alienation, and abandonment.

The relationship between children born of war and their mothers is of particular interest in relation to questions about the "natural" family unit. From my interviews

conducted with women in Sierra Leone, the bond between mothers and their children does not seem to have been impacted negatively in relation to the paternity of the children.(Baldi and MacKenzie 2007, 92) Glenis Taylor from UNICEF Sierra Leone told a particularly moving story:

> There was a girl mother in a center and she lost her child. She was not interested in gaining contact with the father. The child died and I thought she would have been happy with that- poor child- but she cried and was so unhappy. She was saying 'after all this- this was what I had to show' at least I had this child as a product of my pain. She was very upset. Many women were interested in having the best for their children. (Taylor 2005)

Only one woman I spoke with admitted that things were "strange" between her and her child and that she had a hard time accepting the child because of his paternity; however, Mameh Kargbo from COOPI noted that a number of women wanted to take the lives of children conceived as a result of rape. (2005) She reported that these women would say things like "these children are constant reminders.... tomorrow they will ask 'where is my father.'"(Kargbo 2005) According to Kargbo, for women who have been gang raped, "the agony of not being able to identify the father of their child is sometimes too much to bear."(Kargbo 2005) Dehungue Shiaka of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs maintains that women will likely have strained relationships with children born of rape:

> There could be social problems on both sides [the mother and the child]. Because on one hand we have a mother that thinks 'ok, this child is my child and I thank the Lord for this child' but on the other hand this child is a product of rape and the mother will think 'the rebel raped me and this is the result.' So that kind of normal care that you would expect from a mother may not happen and if that baby grows up with that kind of neglect from the mother. Then the frustration will also be with the baby and there is a possibility that there will be a bad relationship on both sides from the growing child who may think that the mother is neglecting him or her and the mother too that may think that 'oh this child is his [the perpetrator of rape]. (Shiaka 2005)

ii. Stigma and Children Born of Rape

Unfortunately, it is not just the women and girls who have been raped who are stigmatized; the children they give birth to also face similar labelling and stigma. "Rebel baby" or "bush pikin" (bush baby) are both labels used in Sierra Leone to describe children born of rape. Francis Murray Lahai, the Focal Point of the Street Children's Task Force in the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs reported, "community people, whatever the case, say 'oh this girl was missing during the war, she has reappeared with a child- who is the father?'… If it is not possible to know who the father is they will start stigmatizing the mother and the child and calling them names."(Lahai 2005) Child Integrated Services also affirmed, "when [community members] know that a child has been born out of such a situation [rape], the child is stigmatized and also the mother… so many people find it difficult to realize that the child suffered maybe as the result of ill luck." (Mansaray 2005)

Earlier in this chapter it was noted that women are often stigmatized post-conflict if they have a child and are unmarried. This is due, in part, to the fact that rape was so pervasive that many single mothers are thought to be victims of rape. Women are encouraged to marry in order to "fuse" into the community. This may include marrying someone other than the person they chose to have a relationship with during the war, and it may also include marrying their rape perpetrator. As a result, children born during the conflict and immediately after may have a greater chance of being stigmatized if they are born to a single mother than to a two parent family- even if their mother was forced to marry her former rebel captor or her rape perpetrator.(Baldi and MacKenzie 2007, 90)

My research revealed many cases of women who gave birth during the conflict and later married a man other than the child's father. Twenty-four percent of the women I interviewed acknowledged that they had children born from at least 2 different fathers. Unfortunately, due to similar blanket assumptions about sex and childbirth during the conflict, husbands may reject children born during the conflict as "bad blood."(Kargbo 2005) Generally, divorce and remarriage has been quite common in Sierra Leone. Traditionally, the new husband will adopt his wife's children and formally or informally accept them as his own. Unfortunately, several women I interviewed expressed "problems" between their current husbands and the children they had given birth to before the marriage.[131] One woman in particular confided that her mother had to raise her child because her new husband would not accept the child.[132] This negative reaction from men contributes to women and girls remaining silent about rape. Kargbo explains the results of this rejection, "[having a child born of rape] is not a problem when the men do not know. That is why you have spontaneous reintegration [where the girls and women] come quietly so that no one knows and no family member knows whether this child is born of rape."(Kargbo 2005)

One of the most visible categories of children born of war are children born as a result of rape perpetrated by foreign peacekeepers or United Nations staff. It must be said that some women had consensual relationships with these men; however, there were also cases of UN staff and peacekeepers committing rape. Further, the use of Sierra Leonean women and girls as prostitutes is, and remains, a serious concern. Dehenge from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs admitted,

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[131] Personal Interview with Interviewees # 4, 21, 23, 49, 12. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005.
[132] Personal Interview with Interviewee # 25. Freetown, Sierra Leone December 2005

"we had ECOMOG and UN and all of them had relationships with girls and there were children from those relationships."(Shiaka 2005) Unlike other children born of rape in Sierra Leone, the children born from foreign soldiers or staff are identifiable by their physical characteristics. In certain areas where peacekeepers have been stationed, it is not unusual to see children who have physical characteristics that are understood as "not Sierra Leonean." Unable to explain why, Shiaka also noted that if a child is born from a rebel, "the stigma is much more greater [sic] than when a girl has a baby with a ECOMOG soldier or a peacekeeper."(Shiaka 2005) Despite the fact that this "ranking" of children born of war tends to favour children born to foreigners, their visibility in the community renders them vulnerable in comparison to those children whose paternity can remain hidden. Further, even if the child may experience fewer stigmas than other children born of war, the issue of abandonment is a real concern for children born from foreign soldiers or staff. For these children, there is no hope of locating their fathers and there is no hope for their mothers to receive help with the child from the family of the father.

Stigmatization is not the only obstacle facing children born of war. Many children- whether they are born as a result of rape or not- have mothers and fathers with limited parenting skills. Their parents may have been involved with the fighting forces from childhood and may never have been parented themselves. This is of particular concern for women and girls because they are typically held responsible for the majority of the child rearing in Sierra Leone. Some women and girls were abducted by rebel forces at extremely young ages. In particular, 23% of the women interviewed in Makeni gave birth before the age of 15.(Baldi and MacKenzie 2007, 91) Some women I

interviewed could not remember life before they were with the fighting forces because they were with them from such young ages. These girls were socialized to be fighters not to be mothers. Even women and girls who did not grow up with the fighting forces may lack knowledge about parenting due to the fact that, through displacement or death, they were separated from one or both their parents during the conflict.

During the 11-year civil conflict, large portions of the general population lost, or were separated from, at least one parent. This meant that there were numerous social arrangements other than the traditional family structure including: child headed households; female headed households; grandmothers, aunts, or uncles acting as primary caregivers; or children growing up in orphanages, in foster homes, or spending extended periods of time in interim care centres. Despite the multiplicity of arrangements for child rearing that existed during the conflict, one single arrangement has been presented as ideal post-conflict. That is, biological mothers are expected to raise their children *and* are expected to possess the skills necessary to do so. In effect, it is anticipated that mothering skills will naturally invoke themselves even for those women and girls with neither experience nor familiarity of motherhood.

Each of the sources of stigmatization for women and children in relation to war rape and children born as a result of wartime rape correlates back to marriage and the model of the liberal family. If a husband rapes his wife there is no law or social stigma in Sierra Leone that will distinguish the child produced as atypical; however, children born as a result of a rape that occurred outside of marriage are identified as bastards, war babies, and rebel babies (unless the mother marries). Stevens would describe this distinction as a by-product of policies that regulate the family: "It is the prerogative of

the state to distinguish and hence to constitute, the difference between what is profane (sex as 'fornication,' children as 'illegitimate') and what is sacred (sex within marriage, legitimate children). (1998, 223)

The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations NGOs and International Agencies

There are few programs that address wartime rape as a major obstacle to reintegration and rehabilitation in post-conflict Sierra Leone. Organizations like PHR have addressed the medical needs of women who were raped; however, long-term programs that offer strategies to help women heal are rare. Even scarcer are programs that address the needs of children born as a result of wartime rape. In fact, of all the programs, organizations, and agencies that infiltrated Sierra Leone after the conflict, there was not a single one that identified children born of rape as beneficiaries. When asked why this category of children had been overlooked, a senior member of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs could only say,

> It is difficult to identify this group and we have been sensing something about that. During the war we had a lot of peacekeeping troops coming and then going back and around them we used to see a large number of girls and they had children with these peacekeepers and they left and most of these girls have the children with them and there is no one to take direct control or responsibility. We think this might be a problem for that particular category... When women bring children to orphanages we have tried to find out what has happened that they want to give up their child and we often find that the father was a peacekeeper or a combatant or someone who is not dead or who has left the country. (Lahai 2005)

Not a single person from any of the children's agencies I spoke with could tell me exactly why children born of war had not been given specific attention. Some mentioned the funding structure for their agency and admitted that they were only funded to carry out programs for categories of vulnerable children identified by their donors. As a result, even if organizations had assessed that there was a dire need to

provide for children born of war, if their donors- some of them located in other countries- had not identified them as beneficiaries, there would be no money to fund projects associated with children born of war. This meant that agencies could only address children born of war indirectly- through programs for their mothers, for example. Francis Murray Lahai describes the result of this lack of direct funding: "We have some partners that in a rather uncoordinated way offer some form of assistance [to children born of war.] But they are living by chance, just by chance." (2005)

With no agencies identifying children born or war, they, in effect, become an "un"- category with no specific resources, rights, or protection. Policies identified other categories of vulnerable children but excluded, and thus de-legitimized this category. In turn, there was a virtual vacuum in Sierra Leone in terms of programs that addressed children born of war. Augustan Binue of Ben Hirsh admitted, "there was nothing put into place for these children. These children were only taken care of by the Interim Care Centre because they were abandoned on the streets and other places and brought here. Those that we cannot trace their families we foster them and call them 'community children." When asked what happens to these children, Shiaka of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs simply replied, "they are left."(Shiaka 2007)

Even organizations like UNICEF, which had extensive resources and had conducted numerous research programs assessing the needs of children post-conflict did not have any response to children born of war. Glenis Taylor from UNICEF Sierra Leone admitted that the issue did not fit within their agenda because "The war is over. We are looking at vulnerable children broadly. Like street children and girl mothers."(2005) She also confessed to pressure from donors: "They [donors] are now

saying that the war was over… it is now 5 years since it was over…it is now time to move away from [any] war associations."(Taylor 2005) Thus, it seems as though even with the growing awareness of the number of children born of war and their vulnerabilities, organizations cannot overcome the restrictions of their funding.

The radicalization of development, or the conflation of security and development policies, provides a partial explanation for this neglect by the post-conflict policy community. I argue that linking development and security has meant that "traditional" security concerns such as the disarmament of male combatants has taken precedence over so-called "everyday politics" such as sex and childbirth. Although rape has been identified as a security interest particular to women, rape is still not considered an issue of "high politics." Hansen explains that matters relating to the security of women often get categorized as individual or human security concerns. She argues that human security or individual security matters are still prioritized below public "collective" security threats and relegated to the private realm. (Hansen 2006, 35) The prioritization of security concerns post-conflict clearly relied on placing women and "the family" in the private realm in comparison to collective security threats such as organized violence.

The official silence on the category of children born of war in Sierra Leone stands in stark contrast to the overwhelming evidence of the existence of this category of children and a widespread knowledge of the vulnerabilities they faced. The aid community did not work to shatter the silence surrounding war rape or to create acceptance for those children born as a result. In fact, by failing to identify children born of war as a vulnerable category of children post-conflict, NGOs, aid agencies, and

international organizations were complicit in maintaining gender norms and hierarchies that have categorized rape and childbirth as "private" issues rather than post-conflict development and security concerns.

Initial Recommendations and Conclusion

Post-conflict policies contributed to the (re)construction of norms associated with "appropriate" and "natural" roles for mothers and fathers in Sierra Leone. My research begs the question, if the process of reintegration within the family was supposed to be "natural," why were there such concerted efforts to encourage women to marry? Presenting women with the option of marriage or shame; having grandmothers raise grandchildren to help persuade men that their daughters are worthy of marriage; hiding the paternity of children born of rape; encouraging women to marry their rape perpetrators…none of these practices appear natural or "normal." Rather, each of them demonstrates the intensity of the effort to create family units post-conflict.

The meanings of development, reconstruction, reconciliation, and rehabilitation must be reconsidered. Rather than collective, universal processes that transpire after the official end of a war, development, reconstruction, and rehabilitation are exclusive processes and often exclude women and girls. For countless women in Sierra Leone, post-conflict reintegration is defined by silence, concealment, stigma, and fear. The period after a conflict is not always a time of positive transformation. Further, development policies do not necessarily replace traditional, corrupt, chaotic or violent arrangements with peaceful and progressive ones.

In addition to rethinking terms associated with post-conflict development, I argue that there is a need to expand our understanding of "children affected by war" beyond

the categories of child soldier, abandoned children, street children, and HIV/AIDS orphans. Although the children in each of these groupings certainly are vulnerable, they do not encompass the entirety of children who require attention post-conflict. The recent fixation on child soldiers (read: the image of a young male child holding a gun) has eclipsed the need for research on other categories of children impacted by warfare. This "other" category does not simply include children born of rape; rather, children born to amputees, disabled children and children with inherited drug addictions are also all to often overlooked by post-conflict policies and mainstream Western media.

It is only when assumptions about heterosexual relationships, marriage, motherhood, and childbirth as natural are abandoned that truly original and progressive thinking and policies can be initiated. The Sierra Leone case study demonstrates that sex, marriage, childbirth, and motherhood are regulated, rather than natural, relationships. Most importantly, childbirth and motherhood cannot be viewed by policy-makers as equally instinctual. Childbirth may be a biological function but sex and reproduction do not occur organically; further, the group of interviewee women show that the desire to be a mother and the skills required to nurture children are not hard-wired.

Just as the model of the family requires rethinking, the understanding of wartime rape and the birth of children as a result of rape also must be complicated beyond categories such as acts of genocide, offences on enemy men, or symbolic crossings of boundaries or territories. Rather than war being a time where sexual violence is exceptionally high, it is possible that war, and the destabilization of state control that often comes with war, reveals the immense effort that is made to regulate sex and to

keep it in the private realm. During peacetime, or "normal politics," the state functions and can grant men access to women's bodies and labour through the institution of marriage. However, during war- in the absence of this guarantee, and during times of heightened efforts to control and manipulate "the enemy"- the female body and reproductive capacities are one of the most significant sites of power politics.

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Conclusion

This dissertation offered a critical examination of sex, power, and the (re)construction of women in post-conflict Sierra Leone. It problematized how we understand both conflict and "post"-conflict by looking at the various types of "conflicts," including sexual violence, gendered ordering, stigmatization, and stereotyping that continue in the so-called post-conflict moment. This analysis uncovered the gendered nature of terms such as post-conflict, rehabilitation, violence, reintegration, and development. It also showed how the liberal emphasis on universalism, objective humanitarianism, and economic development overshadow oppressive and restrictive disciplinary measures that take place in the name of achieving these objectives.

Each chapter of this dissertation delves into the question and meanings of "post" conflict in greater detail. Chapter One provides a basis from which to rethink the so-called merits of liberal development. My own theoretical perspective drew upon the work of critical scholarship in the social sciences and humanities, particularly Michel Foucault, Jaqueline Stevens, Lene Hansen and Jaques Donzelot. This critical approach informed my analysis of specific post-conflict development policies. In addition, this framework enabled unique reflections on development and "post-conflict" more generally in a manner all too rare to these fields.

The first element of my approach, which views development policy discourses as forms of discipline, encouraged careful examination of the language used in the context of development and post-conflict development. This approach also helped make the case that development actors are not simply benevolent a-political actors but have significant powers in shaping and constraining politics, identity and power structures. The second element of

my approach identified the post-conflict moment as a site where "legitimate" subjects and behaviors are constituted. Rather than viewing post-conflict merely as a positive linear transition point following war, my approach demonstrated the need for further investigation into the restrictions placed on behavior and identities in the name of "returning to normal." The third element implicated development policies in the power hierarchies that are (re)created post-conflict. Again, this approach further highlighted the political implications of development policies. Finally, the fourth element of my approach emphasized the importance of understanding relationships between sex and the body to politics and power- with particular focus on the creation of the family structure- in any analysis of "post"-conflict power relations. This approach allowed me to "bring sex back" into international relations by demonstrating how sex, marriage and the family are intertwined in political policy and power structures.

Chapter Two delineated the historical context of the conflict in Sierra Leone. It provided a genealogy of sexual regulations in Sierra Leone in order to uncover the continuities and discontinuities in gender ordering and sexual violence in the country. Chapter Three interrogated the ways in which former female soldiers are socially constructed in the post-conflict context. I found that generalized perceptions of women and girls are made without considering their own voices. My interviewees illustrated many experiences of girls and women and affirmed that they are capable of speaking for themselves, including describing and explaining their experiences and roles during the conflict.

My research indicated that male soldiers continue to be securitized post-conflict in contrast to the "naturalization" of women. The reintegration process for men has been

emphasized as vital to the transition from war to peace while the reintegration process for females has been deemed a "social concern" and has been moralized as a "return to normal." The idea of the female war victim continues to inform, and limit, how former female combatants are constructed and, correspondingly, "processed" through disarmament and reintegration programs. I concluded that the reluctance by international aid agencies, the United Nations, the World Bank and other international organizations to name female soldiers as soldiers rather than "females associated with the war," "dependents," or "camp followers" also ignores, minimizes and depoliticises their roles during the conflict.

Focusing on the post-conflict period, Chapter Four offers a re-examination of the concept of empowerment. Drawing again on a literature review, field research and my interviews I found that despite the multitude of actors employing this term- particularly in relation to women- its meaning is ambiguous at best and has been conceptualized without input from the "beneficiaries" of empowerment programs. I provided an exploration of the term empowerment, including feminist accounts of the term, participatory approaches to empowerment, and the way current development actors use the term. Through my comparison of the "rhetoric" of empowerment to responses from my interviewees regarding power and empowerment I concluded that empowerment policy does not reflect the input of beneficiaries and is often couched in neoliberal policies that place the responsibility of "modern" development on beneficiaries. Finally, I looked at reintegration policies in Sierra Leone as an example of stinted empowerment initiatives.

In Chapter Five, "Loving Your Enemy: Rape, Childbirth and the Reinterpretation of Reintegration in Sierra Leone," I concluded that "reintegration" in the post-conflict context often refers to the process of (male) soldiers disarming and "society returning to normal." I argued that this narrative ignores the experience of the women and girls, including the hundreds of thousands who were raped and the children that were born as a result of rape. In my research and as a consequence of my interviews I considered how dominant notions of post-conflict reintegration omit five particular concerns related to women's lives in "post"-conflict Sierra Leone, including: the artifice of the "natural" liberal family model in legal and development discourses; rape as a strategy of war; stigma as a product of policy making; children born of rape; and, the politics of prioritization for aid agencies and NGOs working in development.

Drawing on the findings of each of the substantive chapters, I have come to several broad conclusions related to my dissertation's questions. First, I have found that the impacts of conflict cannot possibly be fathomed without on the ground research. My time in Sierra Leone was sufficient to clarify that the multiple effects of war on communities are inadequately captured in the academic and policy literatures. As well, it confirmed for me that the "collateral damage" of a conflict stretches far beyond the official timelines of war. When asked about the impact of war on civilians, Foday Sankoh, a former RUF commander, responded that when two elephants are fighting it is the grass that suffers. This is one viewpoint I share with Sankoh. I believe that if you want to see the impact of war on people – children, women or men - you cannot only examine the "official" and public conflict and the warring parties. Rather, you must also consider the impact on civilians and communities not only during the war but years

later. Mere written descriptions or statistics accounting for deaths and destruction in war tell only one story about conflict; however they cannot convey the breadth and depth of various extended impacts of trauma, displacement, horror, and violence on a population. My dissertation has argued that a more nuanced and textured analysis comes from speaking and listening to girls, women and peoples whose lives are impacted by the conflict, and taking into account their voices and experiences, as well as their views of what needs to be done.

My second broader conclusion relates to the current debates surrounding the "subject" and "object" of security studies. I agree with those at the Copenhagen School that security is a political category resulting in the prioritization of particular issues or events as significant over "everyday politics." However, I argued this understanding does not help us to overcome the manner in which security concerns continue to be prioritized. Like Lene Hansen I think "new" conceptions of security such as human security do not free us from the hierarchy of policy priorities associated with security. Human security or individual security concerns still do not receive the same amount of attention and funding as so-called "hard" security matters. This means that in patriarchal societies security threats that typically concern women do not "make the cut" for securitization because women and "gender issues" largely remain in the domestic sphere rather than the political, international, or security sphere.

My third broad conclusion is that while the academic field of development has grown and "developed" with the surge in critical, post-colonial and feminist scholars, development policies have not detached themselves from their liberal influences and modernization tendencies. The dominant discourses of development policy, including the

prevalence of development models and the focus on "stages," deliverables, outputs, and capacity are demonstrative of the liberal bias of development policy as well as continuities with its colonial and imperial roots. Development policy needs its own rehabilitation process. Rather than another reinvention of development policy through discursive incarnations such as participatory, empowerment, or capacity building, I argue that development policy must take serious critical scholarship. Development organizations cannot continue to reinvent themselves as a sort of humanitarian messiah without taking seriously the multiple failures and limits to current development logic. The gap between scholars who conduct research and provide reflections on issues pertaining to development and the major decision-makers in development policy remains far too vast.

My final broad conclusion is that academic scholarship is greatly enhanced by personal contact in the field. I do not believe field research changes everyone or makes every project better. It is quite possible to go anywhere to conduct field research and keep a spatial and emotional distance from your "research subjects." I believe scholars should go into the field informed, yet open to the possibility of drastically altering their approach, research questions, or project according to their experience on the ground. For field research to be as useful and non-exploitative as possible I believe researchers must recognize that the subaltern can and does speak. In addition, researchers must truly *listen* to the people they talk to and *take seriously* their voices and allow these voices to direct their work.

In addition to the conclusions and recommendations offered in each chapter, I thought it would be fitting to highlight the recommendations of three people who each have worked in the area of development in Sierra Leone for over 15 years. The first, Hamidu

Jalloh, is a Sierra Leonean living in Freetown who has been working in the area of development for most of his career. He expressed his frustration with the disarmament process in Sierra Leone and offered these suggestions:

> This is the way I would have looked at the DDR [disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration] program, if I had my say I would have loved the DDR to be heavily rural biased because most of the people came from there. We need a heavy investment in infrastructure. There is also a need to work the land resources- the land is lying there, there is wastage no body knows how to process. We need to offer useful and practical skills training such as farm husbandry. People get frustrated because they can't get jobs with their skills training so they end up going to the diamond mines. Most of the former combatants are in Kono in the mining areas. (Jalloh, 2005)

Jalloh's suggestions show the need for truly "bottom up" ideas of development. For him, impractical development initiatives take funding and energy away from programs that could more optimally benefit local areas. Edward Anague, the founder of a small development organization in Freetown that focuses on amputees and victims of sexual assault offers a second perspective:

> We need something that creates employment. If you train for only 6 months and you can't even fix a button what can you call that person- not a seamstress. Education refocuses. There is a need to give ex-combatants something meaningful so that the person can see it as a legitimate option. This should be a long term process. It is not a crash course. It is not about giving $100 to ex-combatants. If you wants results it has to be more than a 6 month program- NGOs are pressured to produce 'results' but in the end the projects don't amount to anything. (Anague, 2005)

Anague reiterates the frustration expressed by Jalloh with short-term inappropriate development initiatives. A third insight was offered by Wendy Melville, the director of Community Programs 4 Women in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Melville, a British citizen, went to Sierra Leone in the late 1980s to work in development and stayed throughout the civil war talks about her experience working with women:

> Development really comes down to economics. What [the women I work with] need is some sort of means of income. Whenever you ask people what they need they tell you. What they want is small bits of money to start up a business. Education for their children is also a desire. (Melville, 2005)

Each of these aid workers demonstrate that Sierra Leone does not need projects, models and plans for development invented from outside its borders; rather, people who live and work in Sierra Leone, are committed to the country, and understand the socio-political context already possess ideas and plans for progress and change.

In terms of future research, I hope this dissertation demonstrates the need to think through dominant notions of conflict and post-conflict and encourages long-term and complex analysis of the impacts of war that takes seriously a gendered analysis, and particularly the experiences of girls and women. In addition, there is a need to revisit the current conceptualization of gender in policy discourses. Equating gender to "women's issues" allows patriarchy to come in through the back door (to borrow a phrase from Christine Sylvester) and removes the responsibility of organizations and policy makers to account for their role in the construction of masculinity and femininity. More research must be done to account for and theorize both about violence against women and about violent women. Feminists should be the ones doing this research because it will help to dissolve some of the binaries that continue to limit international relations, including victim/warrior, violent/peaceful, and aggressive/maternal.

Finally, I hope that international relations as a discipline will begin to value and recognize the experience of the researcher in relation to his/her work. Scholars are human too, and as Cynthia Enloe has said, if feminism is about anything it is about being realistic

and honest about our experience.[133] This should include being honest and realistic about the impact of emotionally traumatic and draining research on an individual and the multitude of ways this experience might affect the final research "output." The discipline would be improved if it were to continually emphasize that individuals are complex and emotional beings in addition to researchers or subjects.

My research questions and objectives were truly shaped by my experience in Sierra Leone- especially my time at the "Girls Left Behind" facility in Makeni. I saw this facility as a sort of "ground zero" where almost all gendered assumptions I knew or held were challenged. It was here that I met women breast-feeding their children with the letters "RUF" tattooed on their chest; it was also here that several young women who were enrolled in a sewing class told me about their gun expertise and their role as killers during the war. Here too, I watched a classroom of toddlers shouting their ABCs- knowing many of them were likely products of wartime sexual violence.

Without field research my own work would be seriously limited. A variety of formal and informal experiences and exchanges informed my dissertation, including: interviews with former soldiers, long dinners with local priests, weekend trips to the beach with United Nations staff, observing two homeless men in my neighborhood who were clearly distressed as a result of the conflict- one often carried loafs of bread or sticks in a home-made gun holster, exchanges in taxi cabs with a people from a variety of backgrounds in the country, having three people try to mug me in one day, and having a stranger who clearly did not have extra money pay for my cab because I had left my cash at home. Not all of these experiences can be formally acknowledged in the

[133] I paraphrase this from an informal conversation with Cynthia Enloe at the International Studies Association Conference in San Francisco, 2008.

dissertation; however, every one of them affected the way I observed and processed my research.

My time in Sierra Leone forced me to reconsider concepts such as "post-conflict," "reintegration," "rehabilitation," and "reconstruction." From what I have seen, these terms were not gender neutral. I have focused on the following question throughout my dissertation: what kinds of conflicts continue for women- particularly female soldiers- "post-conflict?" I have concluded that there is no "post" conflict for many female soldiers in Sierra Leone. For a large number of the women interviewed in the study different forms of violence such as forced marriage, sexual exploitation and isolation continues despite the cessation of formal conflict. In addition, female soldiers' social and political choices seem more constrained by notions of loyalty, duty, and identity in the "post" conflict period as they were during the conflict.

This analysis does not fully account for the impact that a young white female, traveling alone from Canada, or the young black women to whom she asked questions about war, childbirth, and violence must have had on my interviewees. I can, and do acknowledge my obvious position of privilege and power in these interactions. I also recognize the ethical implications of asking traumatic and difficult questions of people without having the ability to offer concrete hope that I could do anything to change their current situation. For my interviews with the female soldiers this was particularly difficult. I spent time with them and got to know some quite well. I heard 50 stories- most traumatic, desperate, scary, and emotional. As involved and interested as I was with each individual interviewee, I was always aware of the fact that, at the end of the process, *I* was able to go home.

I must admit that I have never fully reconciled the notion that while I wrote in my safe, comfortable office in Edmonton, Canada, the women I spoke with are back in Sierra Leone, likely still struggling with issues such as post-traumatic stress, isolation, poverty, and poor health. This research may not illicit direct or immediate transformations to the world or Sierra Leone's place within it. My hope, however, is that I have listened to voices and stories that too often have not been heard and have asked questions that previously have not been considered important in the dominant discourses or post-conflict narratives. These voices include many girls and women who have never been asked to share their thoughts and experiences related to war. I have tried throughout this dissertation to transmit these voices with as little distortion, exclusion, or selection as possible. In keeping with my methodology and my desire to highlight, as much as possible, the voices of women in Sierra Leone, I thought it was fitting to end with the reflections of one of the female soldiers I interviewed in Makeni, Sierra Leone:

> They disarmed most of the boys and the ladies remained. So when they disarmed boys and men…they went back to their different places and they left the women here… The men have gone back to their lives without taking the women with them or the children. They don't say 'come with me to start a new life' they just go…So [the organizers of the DDR] need to do something for the women too.[134]

In one short phrase, this woman summarized one of the central conclusions of this chapter. I believe this quotation is an example of the wisdom and insights that are available, if we only listen, to those interested in the experiences of women and girls during conflict and the immediate and lasting impacts of war on women and girls.

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[134] Personal Interview with Interviewee #8, Makeni Sierra Leone. December 2005.

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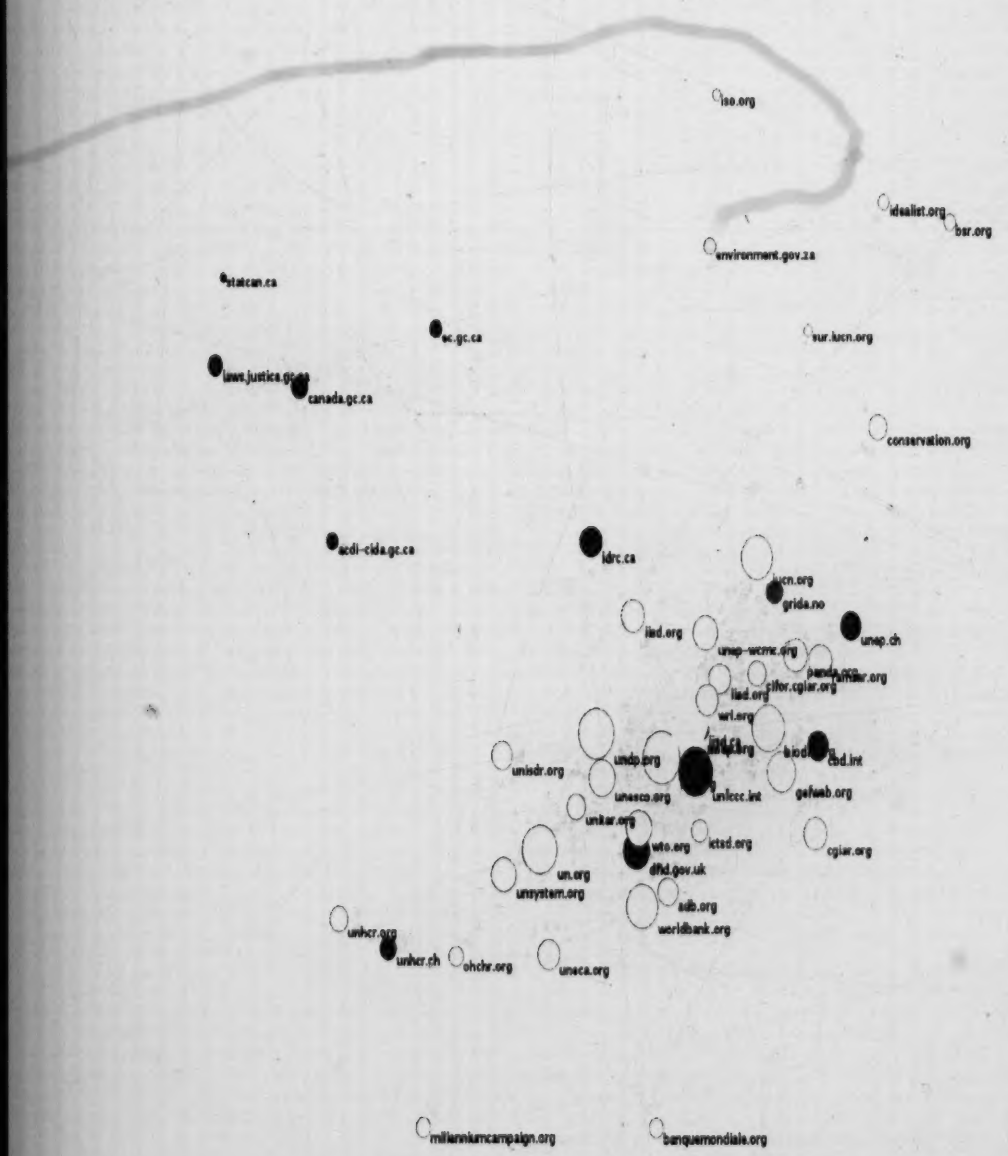
Appendix #1
Structured Interview Questions Asked During Field Research in Sierra Leone

1. How would you define your role during the conflict?
2. Did you join voluntarily or where you abducted?
3. What age were you when you joined/were abducted?
4. What age were you when you were released?
5. What age are you now?
6. How did you leave the armed group?
7. Did you go through a disarmament program? If not, why?
8. What did you know/hear about the program?
9. Did you have family to go to after the war? Did you join them? Why or why not?
10. What do you think were the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
11. Do you think the program would have helped you if you could have gone through? Explain
12. Did you know any girls/women who went through the DDR?
13. Did you know many girls/women who didn't go through the DDR? Why didn't they participate (if you know)?
14. How could the DDR have met your needs/been improved?
15. How does your current situation meet the expectation/dreams you had for yourself?
16. How does your current situation compare to your mother/grandmother?
17. Do you think women have more or less power (in terms of decision, influence, and independence) compared to before the war?
18. Do you have children? How many?
19. Where are the father(s)?
20. What will you tell the children about their father?

Appendix #2 Development and Empowerment Issue Network



development empowerment network

Map Details:

Author:	Megan Mackenzie
Email:	mmmurphy@ualberta.ca
Crawl start:	10 Oct 2007 - 22:16
Crawl end:	11 Oct 2007 - 01:18
Privilege starting points:	off
Analysis Mode:	page
Iterations:	2
Depth:	2
Node count:	47

Map generated from Issuecrawler.net by the Govcom.org Foundation, Amsterdam

Legend:

(.ca) (.org) (.int) (.gov.uk) (.gov.za) (.no) (.ch)

Statistics:

unep.org

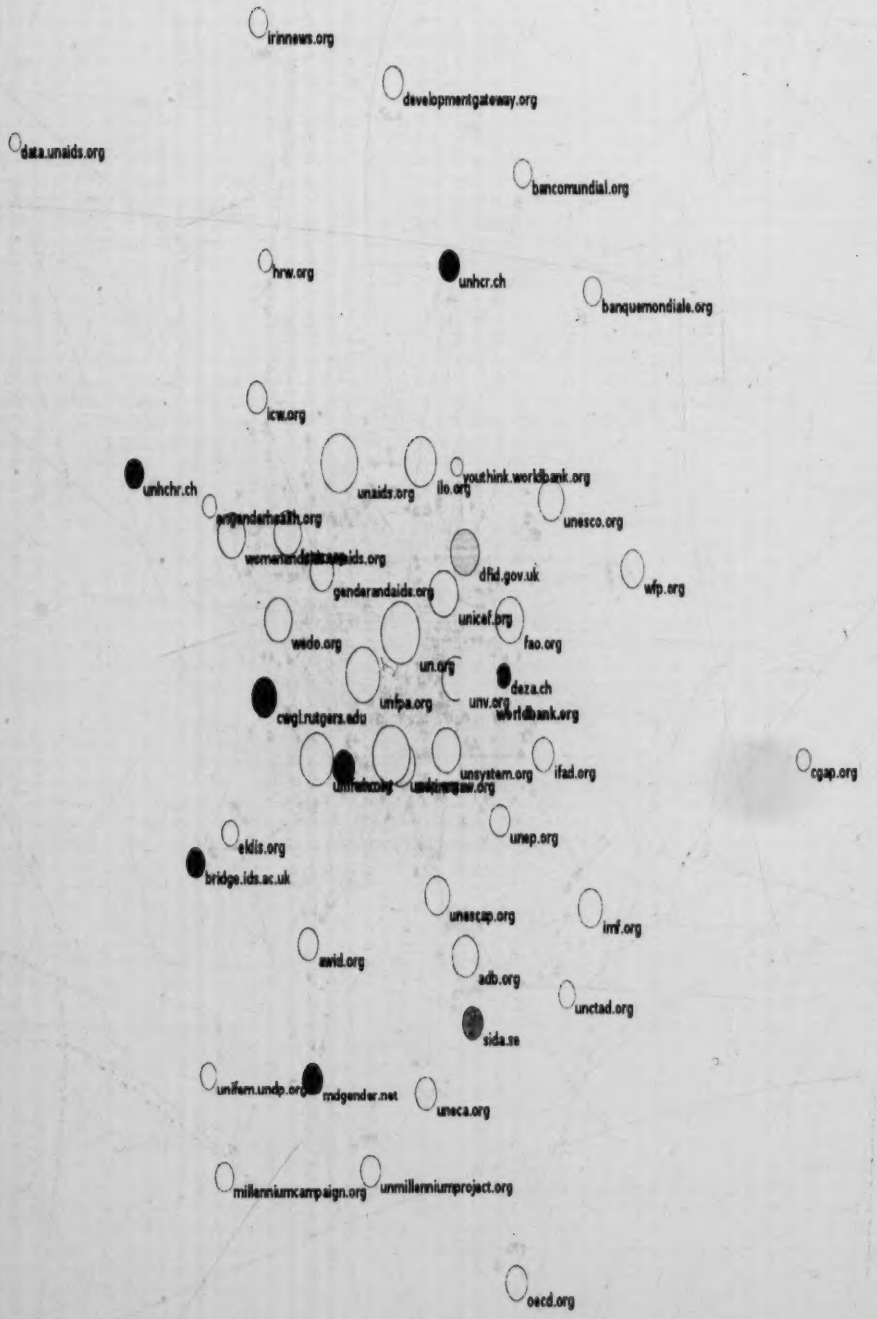
Destination URL:	http://www.unep.org/
Page date stamp:	10 Oct 2007 - 23:44
Links received from crawled population:	4536

Links from network (1 - 20)

1. iied.org	11. unisdr.org
2. iisd.ca	12. unsystem.org
3. iucn.org	13. wri.org
4. ramsar.org	14. wto.org
5. un.org	15. ictsd.org
6. undp.org	16. grida.no
7. unep-wcmc.org	17. cifor.cgiar.org
8. unep.ch	18. cbd.int
9. unesco.org	19. biodiv.org
10. unfccc.int	20. adb.org

Links to network: 13

Appendix #3 Women's Empowerment Network



women empowerment 2

Map Details:

Author:	Megan Mackenzie
Email:	rmhmurphy@ualberta.ca
Crawl start:	11 Oct 2007 - 03:00
Crawl end:	11 Oct 2007 - 05:18
Privilege starting points:	off
Analysis Mode:	page
Iterations:	2
Depth:	2
Node count:	50

Map generated from Issuecrawler.net by the Govcom.org Foundation, Amsterdam.

Legend:

(.org) (.ac.uk) (.edu) (.ch) (.gov.uk) (.net) (.se) (.int)

Statistics:

worldbank.org

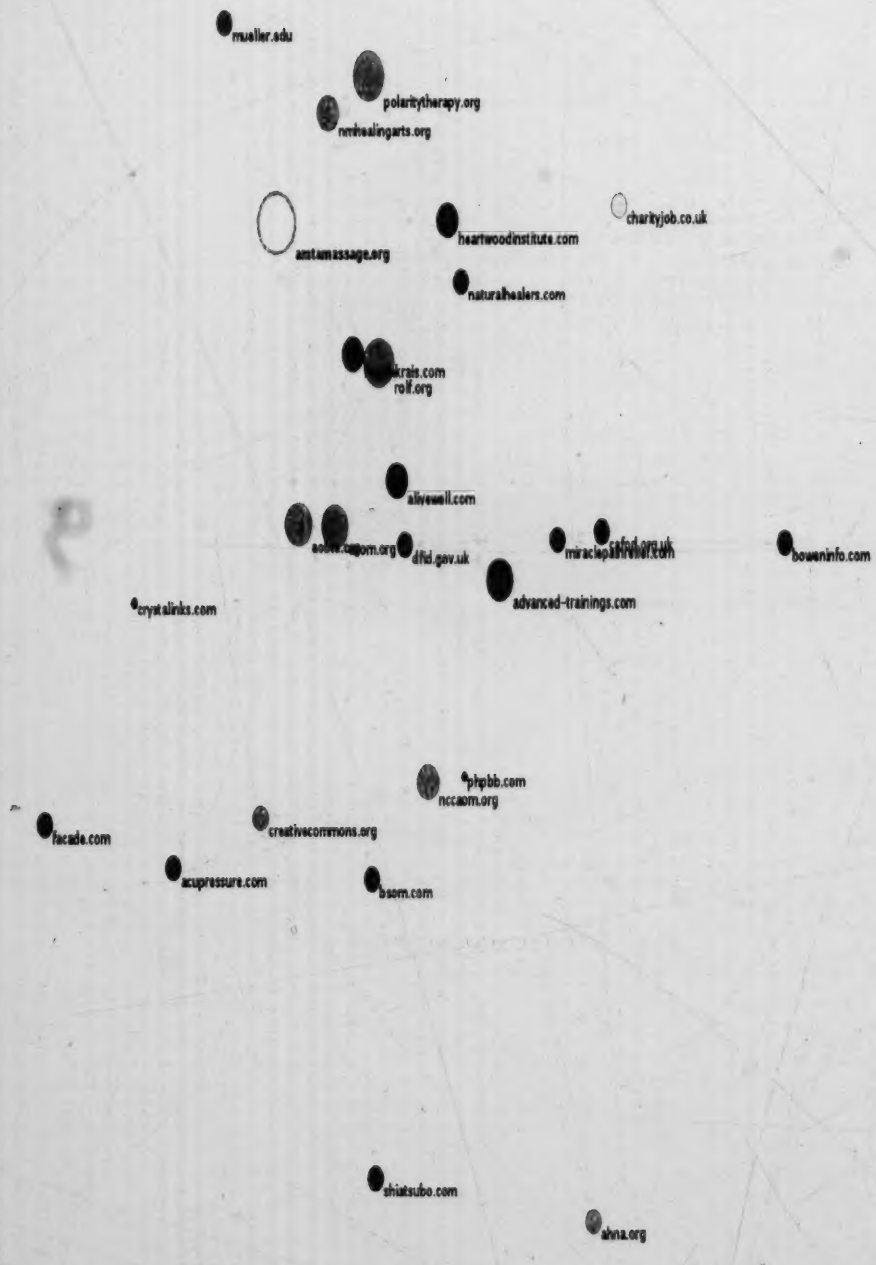
Destination URL:	http://www.worldbank.org/gender/
Page date stamp:	11 Oct 2007 - 03:32
Links received from crawled population:	1929

Links from network (1 - 20)

1. unfpa.org	11. imf.org
2. unicef.org	12. mdgender.net
3. unsystem.org	13. sida.se
4. who.int	14. un-instraw.org
5. youthink.worldbank.org	15. un.org
6. deza.ch	16. unaids.org
7. dfid.gov.uk	17. unctad.org
8. engenderhealth.org	18. undp.org
9. icw.org	19. uneca.org
10. ifad.org	20. unescap.org

Links to network: 8

Appendix #4: Men's Empowerment Network



empowerment men2

Map Details:

Author:	Megan Mackenzie
Email:	mhmurphy@ualberta.ca
Crawl start:	11 Oct 2007 - 01:18
Crawl end:	11 Oct 2007 - 03:39
Privilege starting points:	off
Analysis Mode:	page
Iterations:	2
Depth:	2
Node count:	26

Map generated from issuecrawler.net by the Govcom.org Foundation, Amsterdam

Legend:

(.org) (.com)(.org.uk) (.co.uk) (.gov.uk) (.edu)

Statistics:

amtamassage.org

Destination URL:	http://www.amtamassage.org/
Page date stamp:	11 Oct 2007 - 02:47
Links received from crawled population:	32

Links from network (1 - 20)

1. nmhealingarts.org
2. heartwoodinstitute.com
3. mueller.edu
4. aobta.org
5. advanced-trainings.com
6. aliveweli.com

Links to network: 5

Appendix #5: List of Interviewees in Sierra Leone (excluding female soldiers)

1. Andrea Ferrero. Executive Director of Cooperazeone Internazionale (COOPI), an international organization COOPI carries out development projects and emergency interventions in Africa, Latin America, Asia and in Eastern Europe. Freetown, Sierra Leone 30 November 2005.

2. Wendy Melville. Community Programs 4 Women, an organization she founded to help women start small businesses. Freetown, Sierra Leone 31 November 2005.

3. Rev. Hassan Mansaray. Director of Children Integrated Services (CIS), one of the first organizations to address the needs of abandoned children during the conflict. Freetown, Sierra Leone 1 December 2005.

4. Donald Robert Shaw. Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Relief Fund (UNICEF), Freetown Sierra Leone. 15 November 2005.

5. Bintue J. Magona. Director of the National Commission for War Affected Children (NACWAC). Freetown, Sierra Leone 18 November 2005.

6. Lovetta Pratt. Conciliation Services, an organization focusing on gender and youth. Freetown, Sierra Leone 7 November 2005.

7. Mameh Kargbo. Local staff member of Cooperazeone Internazionale (COOPI). Freetown, Sierra Leone 30 November 2005.

8. Abu J. Conteh. Field Director of Caritas Makeni, a Catholic organization conducting women's programs in Makeni, Sierra Leone. Makeni 6 December 2005.

9. Dehunge Shiaka. Program Officer for the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs Sierra Leone. Freetown, Sierra Leone 15 December 2005.

10. Sullay B. Sesay. Former Information and Sensitization Unit Manager for the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Program in Sierra Leone. Freetown, Sierra Leone 16 December 2005.

11. Hamidu Jalloh. Country officer for the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) Sierra Leone. Freetown, Sierra Leone 15 December 2005.

12. Isha Kamara. Social worker for "The Girls Left Behind" project in Makeni. Makeni, Sierra Leone 23 November 2005.

13. Catherine Zainabl Tarawally. Director of Human Rights Awareness in Makeni and Manager of a radio station in Makeni, Sierra Leone. Makeni, Sierra Leone 24 November 2005.

14. Abu Bakarr Sesay. Social Worker, Caritas Makeni. Makeni, Sierra Leone 8 December 2005.

15. Francis Murray Lahai. Focal Point for the Street Children's Task Force. Freetown, Sierra Leone 30 November 2005.

16. Augustan Turai. Staff at Ben Hirsh, an organization focusing on troubled youth. Freetown, Sierra Leone 11 November 2005.

17. Father Joseph Momoh. Director of Children Associated with the War (CAW). Freetown, Sierra Leone 1, 12, 18 December 2005.

18. Edward Abu. Field director of Children Associated with the War (CAW). Freetown, Sierra Leone 18 December 2005.

19. Father Joseph Turay. Director of Radio Maria. Makeni, Sierra Leone. 11, 14 December 2005.

20. Fea Elizabeth. Social Worker. Makeni Sierra Leone 11 November 2005.

21. Patrick Lewis. Social Worker. Makeni Sierra Leone 11 November 2005.